PERCY
SMITH
JUNIOR
VALENZA

GHOST RIDER

MARVEL

DRAGGED OUT OF HELL

GHOST RIDER

DRAGGED OUT OF HELL

PREVIOUSLY...

The Ghost Rider's old foe Blackheart had secretly influenced the corridors of power in the U.S. and used his infernal abilities to sow chaos throughout the country. In order to keep the Ghost Rider at bay, Blackheart implanted an entity named Exhaust within Johnny. After expelling the demon and taming it, Johnny and the Rider sent Blackheart back to Hell.

Now Johnny and exiled F.B.I. agent Talia Warroad are traveling across the country, stamping out what's left of Blackheart's dark conspiracy!

When innocent blood is spilled, a *Spirit of Vengeance* is born, and **JOHNNY BLAZE** finds himself transformed!

Marvel Comics *presents...*

GHOST RIDER

Dragged Out of Hell

BENJAMIN PERCY
writer

DAVE WACHTER *(#11)*,
CORY SMITH *(#12-15)* &
CHRIS CAMPANA *(#16)* WITH
BRENT PEEPLES *(#14)*
pencilers

DAVE WACHTER *(#11)* &
OREN JUNIOR *(#12-16)* WITH
BRENT PEEPLES *(#14)*
inkers

BRYAN VALENZA
color artist

VC's **TRAVIS LANHAM** *letterer*

BJÖRN BARENDS *cover art*

KAT GREGOROWICZ & NOAH SHARMA *assistant editors*
DARREN SHAN *editor*

DANIEL KIRCHHOFFER
collection editor
LISA MONTALBANO
associate manager, talent relations
JENNIFER GRÜNWALD
director, production & special projects
JEFF YOUNGQUIST
vp production & special projects
YOUSSIF BAYOR
book designer
ADAM DEL RE
manager & senior designer
JAY BOWEN
lead designer
DAVID GABRIEL
svp print, sales & marketing
TIM SMITH 3
sr. manager, digital
JASMINE ALVAREZ & RACHEL YOUNG
digital production
C.B. CEBULSKI
editor in chief

© 2023 MARVEL. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental.

NUMBER ELEVEN

I LIVE *NOWHERE.*
MY HOME IS BUILT OF BLACKTOP.
I CAN'T STOP MOVING...
...BECAUSE THE TROUBLE NEVER ENDS.
I'VE GIVEN UP ON THINGS EVER BEING ANY DIFFERENT.
THIS IS MY LIFE--
--UNTIL MY *DEATH.*

I DON'T KNOW IF IT WILL BE A SEMI GRILL...
...OR A BRICK WALL OR A BLOWN TIRE.
BUT *DEATH* IS EVERYWHERE, AND IT'S GOING TO *CLAIM* ME ONE DAY.
I'VE STOPPED ***FEARING*** IT.
IN FACT, I'LL ***WELCOME*** IT.
BECAUSE IT WILL MEAN I WON'T HAVE TO HURT ANYONE ANYMORE.
ALL THE PAIN WILL BELONG TO *ME.*

THESE DAYS, THE ONLY THING THAT SCARES ME...
...IS HOW MANY I'LL *DESTROY* BEFORE IT'S TIME FOR ME TO GO.
BECAUSE I'M ALWAYS ONE GEAR-SHIFT AWAY FROM DOING TERRIBLE, TERRIBLE THINGS.
IT'S NO SURPRISE MY SLEEP IS PLAGUED BY **NIGHTMARES**...
-GASP-
...SINCE I'M ALREADY LIVING A NIGHTMARE.
BUT AT LEAST I'M NOT ALONE IN THE DARKNESS ANYMORE.

SOMEWHERE IN LOUISIANA.
TALIA...
HEY, TALIA?
SHUT UP FOR A SECOND.
THE @#$% IS THAT?
I SAID, SHUT UP!
I LOST IT. YOU HAPPY?
SORRY, SORRY. I'M STILL STUPID WITH SLEEP.
YOU KNOW HOW A SPIDER FEELS THE SILK OF ITS WEB TREMBLE WHEN SOMETHING GETS TANGLED IN IT?
THIS WAS A LITTLE LIKE THAT. EXCEPT, LIKE, THE ASTRAL VERSION.
THERE'S SOMETHING OUT THERE.
SOMETHING BIG.

NIGHTMARES AGAIN?
YEAH...
BAD ONES.
I CAN'T MAKE THEM GO AWAY.
BUT I CAN PUT OFF YOU GOING TO SLEEP A LITTLE LONGER.
YEAH, OKAY.
I--OW--LIKE THE SOUND OF THAT.
AND, TALIA--
DON'T EVEN THINK ABOUT SAYING SOMETHING SWEET OR I'LL PUKE IN YOUR MOUTH.

WE READ NEWSPAPER ARTICLES. WE WATCH SOCIAL-MEDIA FEEDS AND CHAT BOARDS. WE LISTEN TO POLICE SCANNERS.
WE'RE WORKING OUR WAY ACROSS THE MAP.
A SPIKE IN DEATHS AND DISAPPEARANCES. REPORTS OF RITUALIZED MURDERS. RUMORS OF MONSTERS, GHOSTS OR POSSESSIONS.
THERE'S A LOT OF MESS TO CLEAN UP.
WE'VE BOTH BELONGED TO ORGANIZATIONS.
FROM THE F.B.I. TO *THE THUNDERBOLTS.*
BUT THAT'S NOT THE WAY WE'RE HARDWIRED.
WE CAN BARELY CONTROL OURSELVES, LET ALONE FOLLOW THE RULES.
BUT THAT DOESN'T STOP US FROM DOING WHAT WE CAN TO *HELP.*
THIS COUNTRY IS THICK WITH SHADOWS THAT SPILLED OUT OF BLACKHEART'S CAMPAIGN.
SHADOWS WE CAN SEE CLEARER THAN OTHERS.
WE *ARE* THE DARK, SO WE ARE IDEALLY SUITED TO *FIGHT* THE DARK.
MAYBE IT'S CHARITABLE, BUT PROBABLY, IT'S MORE A COMPULSION.

SOMEWHERE IN ALABAMA.
DILL'S
OPEN
ICE
HEY, MAN.
Sorry WE'RE OPEN
OPEN
2/$4.50
CIGGY'S
WHAT KIND OF BIKE IS THIS ANYWAY?
DON'T TOUCH IT.
KIND OF A RUDE WAY TO ANSWER A FRIENDLY QUESTION.
I'M JUST CURIOUS IS ALL.
SHE SURE LOOKS LIKE--
--THE DEVIL!
SKUNCH
AIIIEEEE!
I TOLD HIM NOT TO TOUCH IT.
I DON'T LIKE THAT THING, JOHNNY.

SOMEWHERE IN FLORIDA.
THIS BIKE... DIDN'T USED TO BE A BIKE.
IT USED TO BE *ME.*
A PART OF ME ANYWAY.
A DEMONIC PARASITE LODGED IN MY MIND, SPYING ON ME...FEEDING OFF ME... *BECOMING* ME.
WHEN WOLVERINE CARVED IT OUT OF MY SKULL, IT LIVED ON...
...AS A THING CALLED *EXHAUST.*
I THOUGHT I HAD BEAT IT.
BEEEP BEEEP
WHAT THE #$%&, JOHNNY!?
I THOUGHT I'D OVERCOME THAT WORST VERSION OF MYSELF.

BUT I'M OBVIOUSLY STRUGGLING TO MAINTAIN CONTROL OVER ANYTHING IN MY LIFE.
@#$%!
VROOOOOM
SCREEEEE
YOU REALIZE WHAT'S HAPPENING, DON'T YOU?
IT WANTS YOU FOR ITSELF.
YOU NEED TO GET RID OF THAT #$%& THING!

SOMEWHERE IN GEORGIA.
BUT THERE'S A PART OF ME THAT DOESN'T WANT TO LET GO.
I KNEW A CARNIE WHO KEPT A TUMOR THE DOCTORS PULLED OUT OF HIM IN A GLASS BOTTLE OF FORMALDEHYDE.
I KNEW A SOLDIER WHO KEPT THE BULLET THAT WAS LODGED IN HIS LUNG.
EAT
I KNEW A DRUNK DRIVER WHO KEPT A PHOTO OF THE FAMILY HE KILLED INSIDE HIS LIQUOR CABINET.
SOMETIMES, IT'S GOOD TO KEEP THE UGLINESS CLOSE, SO WE CAN APPRECIATE HOW FAR WE'VE COME...
...AS LONG AS IT DOESN'T OVERWHELM US.
HEY.
YOU HEAR A WORD I SAID?
SORRY. I WAS SOMEPLACE ELSE.
BLACKHEART MADE A MESS OF THIS COUNTRY, AND WE'VE BEEN DOING A LOT OF CLEANUP LATELY. SUPERNATURAL @#$% MAID SERVICE.
NOW WE'RE ONLY A FEW HOURS AWAY FROM SAVANNAH...
...AND WE'VE KNOWN FOR A WHILE NOW THAT THIS PLACE IS GOING TO BE HOT.
IT'S ALREADY KNOWN AS THE MOST HAUNTED CITY IN AMERICA.
Savannah

"BUT LATELY, THE NEWS HAS BEEN...SCARY.
"LIKE NEIGHBORHOODS OF FAMILIES MURDERED IN THEIR BEDS SCARY.
"BONE EFFIGIES HANGING FROM TREES.
"FAUCETS THROUGHOUT THE CITY RUNNING WITH BLOOD.
"BABBLING VOICES HEARD THROUGH THE RADIO AND PHONES AND TELEVISIONS.
"I THINK WE CAN COUNT ON A SIGNIFICANT DEMONIC PRESENCE."

ON THAT NOTE, THERE'S A HARDWARE STORE ACROSS THE STREET. I'M GOING TO STOCK UP ON SOME GEAR. WE NEED TO ARMOR UP.
I'LL FINISH UP HERE AND GET THE CHECK.
EMMETT'S HARDWARE
WHERE THE #$%& DID...?
VREEEE
HNNGH!

WHEN YOU SURROUND YOURSELF WITH MONSTERS...
...IT'S EASY TO BECOME ONE.
RUM RUM RUM
RUM REEEEEE
WHEN YOU SPEND YOUR LIFE JUDGING OTHERS...
...IT'S EASY TO IGNORE YOUR OWN *FAILINGS.*
I'VE BEEN CLINGING TO THIS THING, DRAGGING IT ALONG WITH US...
VROOOOOM
...EVEN THOUGH I KNEW IT WAS *DANGEROUS.*

IF THE RIDER CONTROLS ME...
...I THINK I WANTED SOMETHING I IN TURN COULD CONTROL.
SOMETHING THAT FELT LIKE AN EXTERNALIZATION OF ALL THE RAGE AND GRIEF AND DOUBT I STRUGGLE WITH.
ROAD CLOSED
I COULD WEAPONIZE IT AGAINST OTHERS.
BUT INSTEAD...
...I'M JUST ENDANGERING MYSELF...

...AND THE ONLY OTHER PERSON WHO SEEMS TO GIVE A $#%& ABOUT ME.
KROOONCH
I NEED TO TRY HARDER NOT TO BE A MONSTER...
...EVEN IF I'LL NEVER BE A HERO.
UFF!

KRRAAAKL
THAT'S FOR SAVING MY ASS.
GAA--!
AND THAT'S FOR ALMOST KILLING ME.

I LIVE NOWHERE.
WHEN YOU LIVE NOWHERE, YOU STILL NEED SOMETHING TO MAKE YOU FEEL CENTERED.
SHRRRUK
THAT'S WHY SOME LONG-HAUL TRUCKERS ALWAYS PARK AT THE SAME REST STOPS, ORDER THE SAME BURGER AND PIE OFF THE MENU.
I'VE GOT A PLACE I GO WHEN I'M FEELING JITTERY AND CAN'T SLEEP.
IT'S MY *GRAVE*. A GRAVE IN MY HEAD. THE GRAVE WHERE I'LL ONE DAY BE BURIED.
"JOHNNY BLAZE," THE STONE READS.
KRUNKA
DEEP DOWN, IN THE DARK, I'M TUCKED AWAY.
THE SILENCE IS PROFOUND.
NOBODY IS SCREAMING AT ME IN PAIN OR ANGER.
I'M FINALLY AT *PEACE*.
I'M FINALLY *HOME*.

EVEN IF I'M NOT THERE YET, AT LEAST AN UGLY PART OF ME IS BURIED.
A ROAD--A FITTING TOMB--WILL BE PAVED OVER EXHAUST.
HAYDEN'S FALLS IS JUST A BAD MEMORY IN THE REARVIEW.
I'M MOVING ON, READY FOR WHAT'S NEXT.
WE'RE TEN MINUTES OUT FROM SAVANNAH.
AND I CAN'T GET A RADIO STATION OR CELL SIGNAL.
SHHHHH
WHEN WE STUDIED THE PATTERN OF SUPERNATURAL ACTIVITY, WHEN WE PINNED ALL THE NEWS STORIES AND POLICE REPORTS ON THE MAP...
...SAVANNAH WAS ONE OF THE PEAKS OF THE PENTAGRAM DESIGN.
WE KNEW IT WAS GOING TO BE BAD.
BUT THIS...

...THIS LOOKS APOCALYPTIC.

NUMBER TWELVE

SPFFFFF
GEORGIA.
THE HELL IS THIS?
WHOEVER IT IS, THEY'RE COMING IN HARD AND FAST.
VROOM
HOLD UP!
YOU FOLKS NEED TO GO BACK THE WAY YOU CAME.
SCREEECH
THIS WHOLE AREA'S LOCKED DOWN.
YOU NEED TO GET OUT OF OUR WAY AND TELL US...

...WHAT'S HAPPENING TO *SAVANNAH?*
AIN'T NO CONCERN OF YOURS.
SERIOUSLY. GET THE #$%& OUT OF OUR WAY. WE'RE HERE TO HELP.
MORE LIKELY TO ***LOOT.*** NOW TURN YOUR PUNK ASSES AROUND.
LOOK BEHIND YOU--
I SAID GET BACK!
UNNNGH...
PSSSS
YOU JUST MADE A BIG @$%& MISTAKE.
YOU'RE NEXT IF YOU DON'T GET BACK IN THAT DEATHMOBILE OF YOURS AND HIGHTAIL IT.

AEEEIIIIII!
JOHNNY? HOW YOU DOING?
IT BURNS...
YES. IT BURNS.

OH, DEAR LORD IN HEAVEN.
HE WILL NOT SAVE YOU.
BLAM BLAM BLAM
I AM NOT HERE FOR YOU.
MAKE WAY.
GAAAAA!

WHAT DO YOU SENSE?
THE PAIN AND FEAR OF THOUSANDS. AND...
...SOMETHING ELSE.
YOU SHOULD STAY BEHIND.
STAY BEHIND? I'M THE ONE WHO BROUGHT US HERE!
THEN YOU HAVE SERVED YOUR PURPOSE.
NO WAY AM I LETTING THAT SKULL-HEADED @#$% HAVE ALL THE FUN.
LET'S SKIP THE PART WHERE YOU TRY GETTING IN MY WAY AGAIN.
OBLIVISCI.

SAVANNAH IS KNOWN AS A NECROPOLIS, A CITY BUILT OVER ITS OWN DEAD.
REVOLUTIONARY WAR. CIVIL WAR. YELLOW FEVER. THOUSANDS OF THE DEAD OCCUPY MASS GRAVES THAT RUN BENEATH THE STREETS AND PARKS.
SAVANNAH
AND NOW DEATH SEEMS TO HAVE RISEN TO THE SURFACE.

AND AMONG THE DEAD ARE HUMANS...
...AND *DEMONS* ALIKE.
TALIA AND I WERE HEADED HERE BECAUSE WE KNEW THE CITY WAS SUFFERING FROM A DEMONIC INFESTATION.
BUT IT LOOKS LIKE SOMETHING BEAT US HERE.
SOMETHING THAT LEFT BEHIND A WAKE OF MERCILESS DESTRUCTION.
THE WRECKAGE IS EVERYWHERE, BUT THE GHOST RIDER CAN SENSE A LOCUS TO ALL OF THIS EVIL...
...IN THE COLONIAL PARK CEMETERY.

WHAT HAPPENED HERE, DEMON?
YOU AGAIN...
HAVEN'T YOU HAD ENOUGH?
YOU ALREADY KILLED ME... GHOST RIDER.
YOU SPEAK NONSENSE, DEMON.
I ASK AGAIN--WHAT HAPPENED HERE?
THE CITY... WAS OUR PLAYGROUND AND OUR ALTAR.
AND THEN...*YOU* CAME...
YOU CAME... AND BURNED IT ALL DOWN!
"THAT MOTHER-$%#@& SPIRIT..."

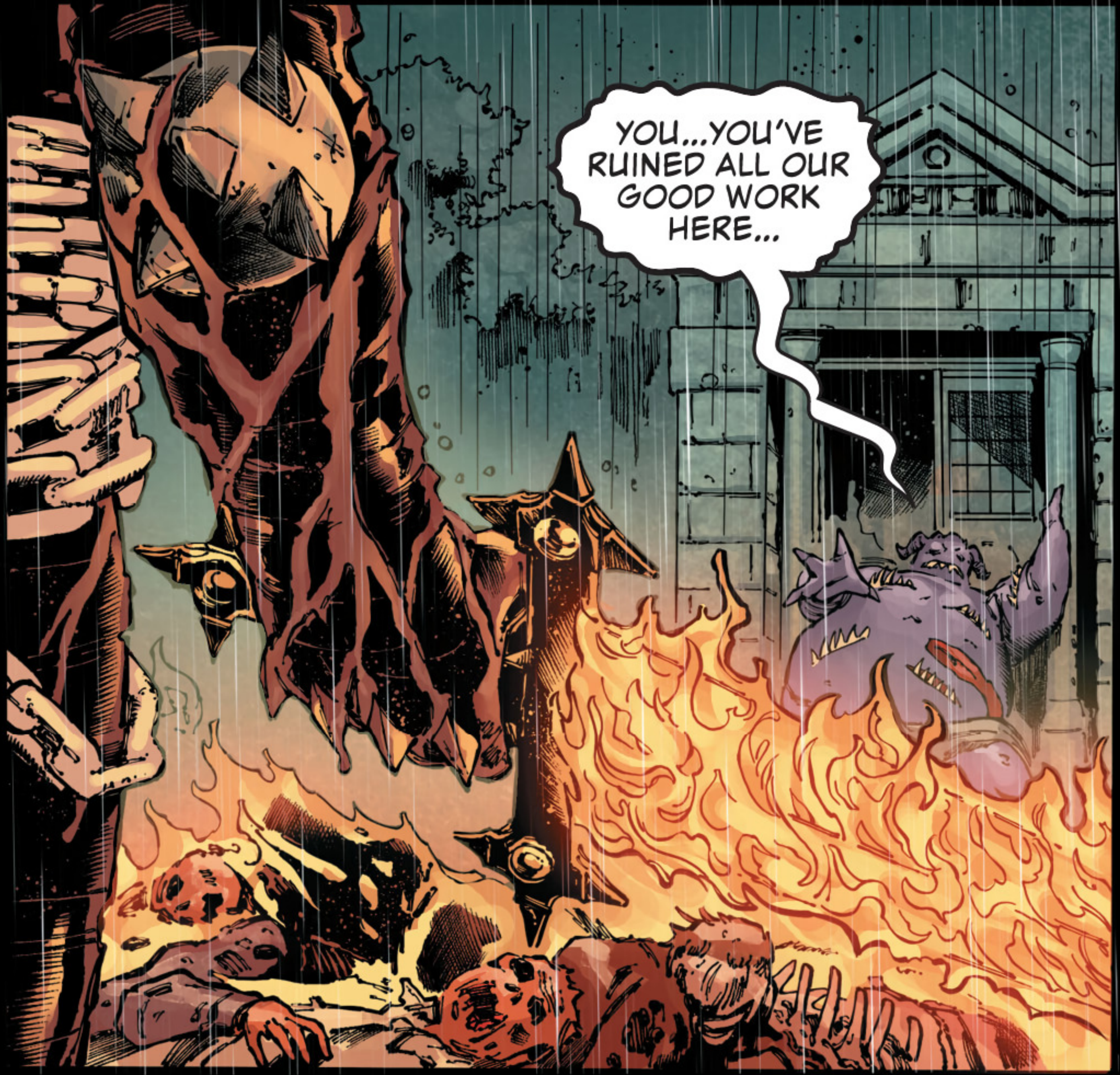
...TRYING TO DITCH ME.
@#%!
SCREEEE
ARE YOU OKAY?
WE THOUGHT HE WAS HERE TO HELP US.
BUT HE KILLED EVERYTHING.
ARE YOU GOING TO KILL ME?
NO, I'M NOT GOING TO KILL YOU.
I'M ONE OF THE GOOD GUYS.
THERE ARE NO GOOD GUYS.
EVERYBODY IS BAD NOW...

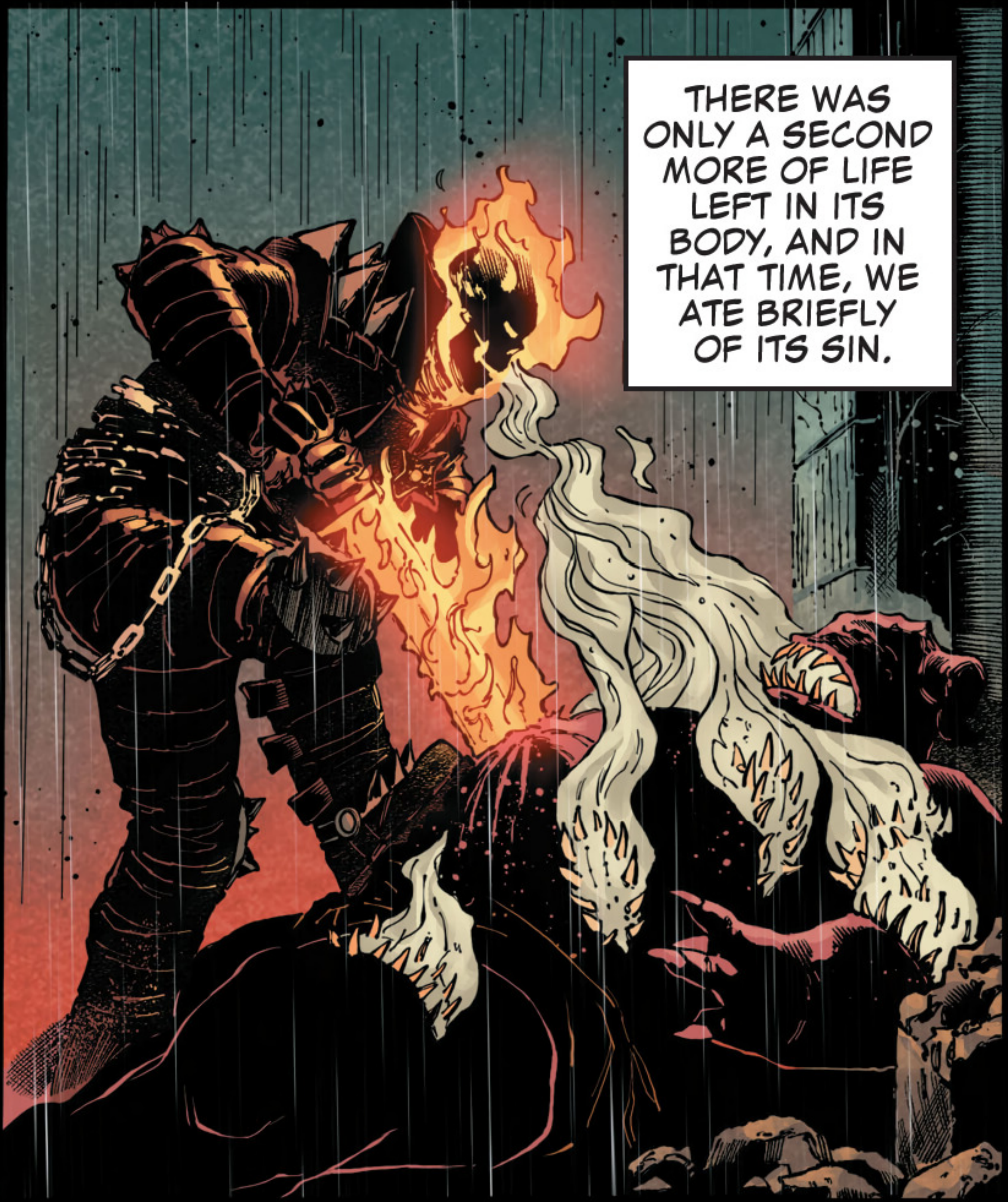
"...EVEN THE ONES WHO ARE SUPPOSED TO SAVE US."
I AM YOUR ENEMY.
BUT I AM *NOT* THE ENEMY YOU BELIEVE ME TO BE.
I SAW WHAT YOU DID, GHOST RIDER.
WE LIVED IN A KIND OF DARK HARMONY WITH THIS CITY. IT FED US.
CHOOM
BUT YOU... YOU BURNED IT TO THE GROUND.
KROOOM
YOU KILLED ALL OF MY CHILDREN.
AND RUINED SO MANY OF THE LIVES YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO DEFEND.
THORNTON
YOU'RE A GREATER EVIL THAN ANYTHING HELL HAS TO OFFER.

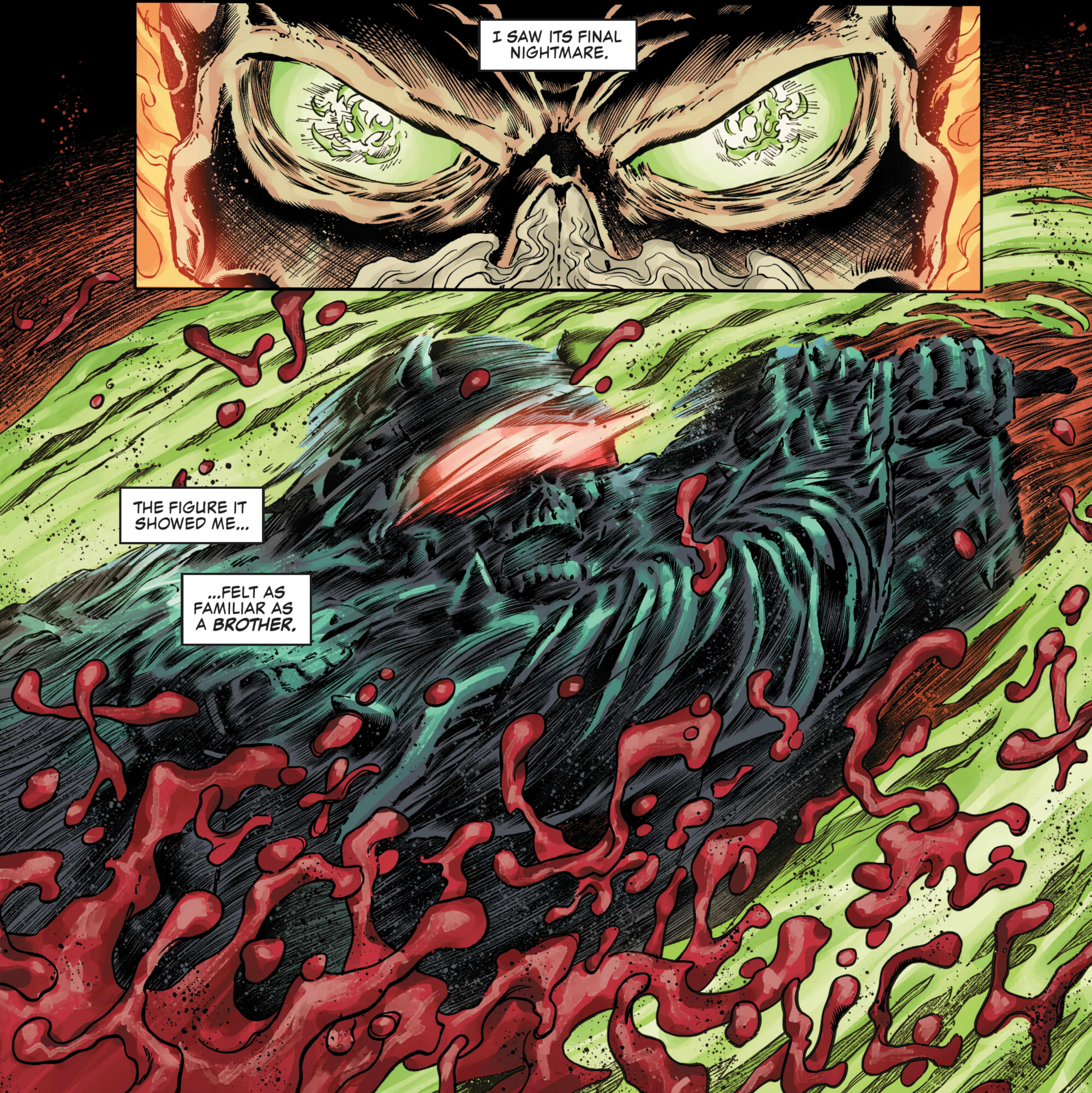
I CAN FEEL DEATH COMING FOR ME.
I CAN FEEL HELL WIDENING ITS JAWS.
I ONLY HOPE TO REMAIN HERE LONG ENOUGH TO SEE YOUR END.

HAARRR!
HISSSSS!
THE CROSS IS PAIN.
THE CROSS IS DEATH.
AND SO THE CROSS WILL BE MY SWORD.
FWOOSH

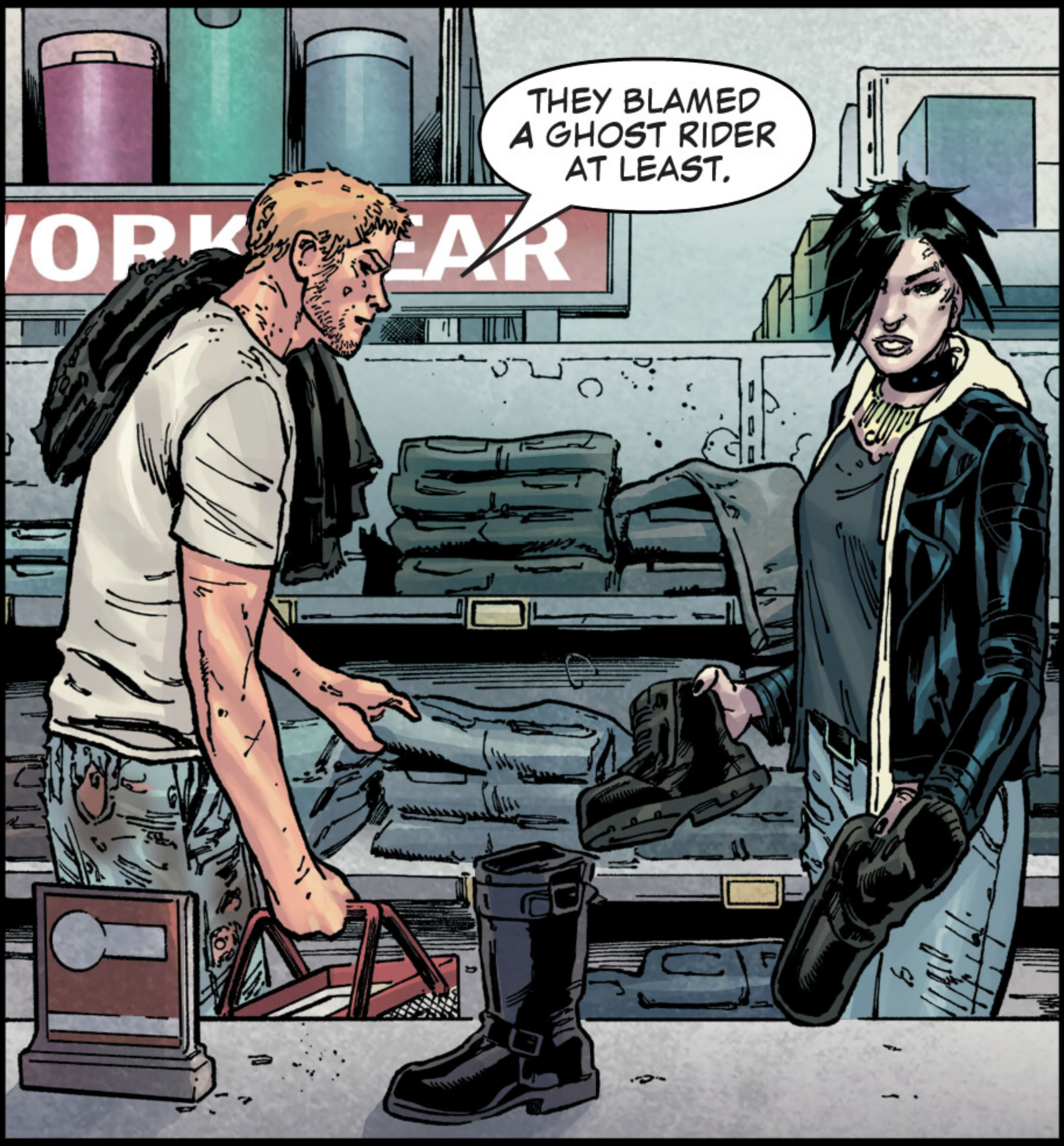
RETURN TO DARKNESS, OR SUFFER IN THE LIGHT!

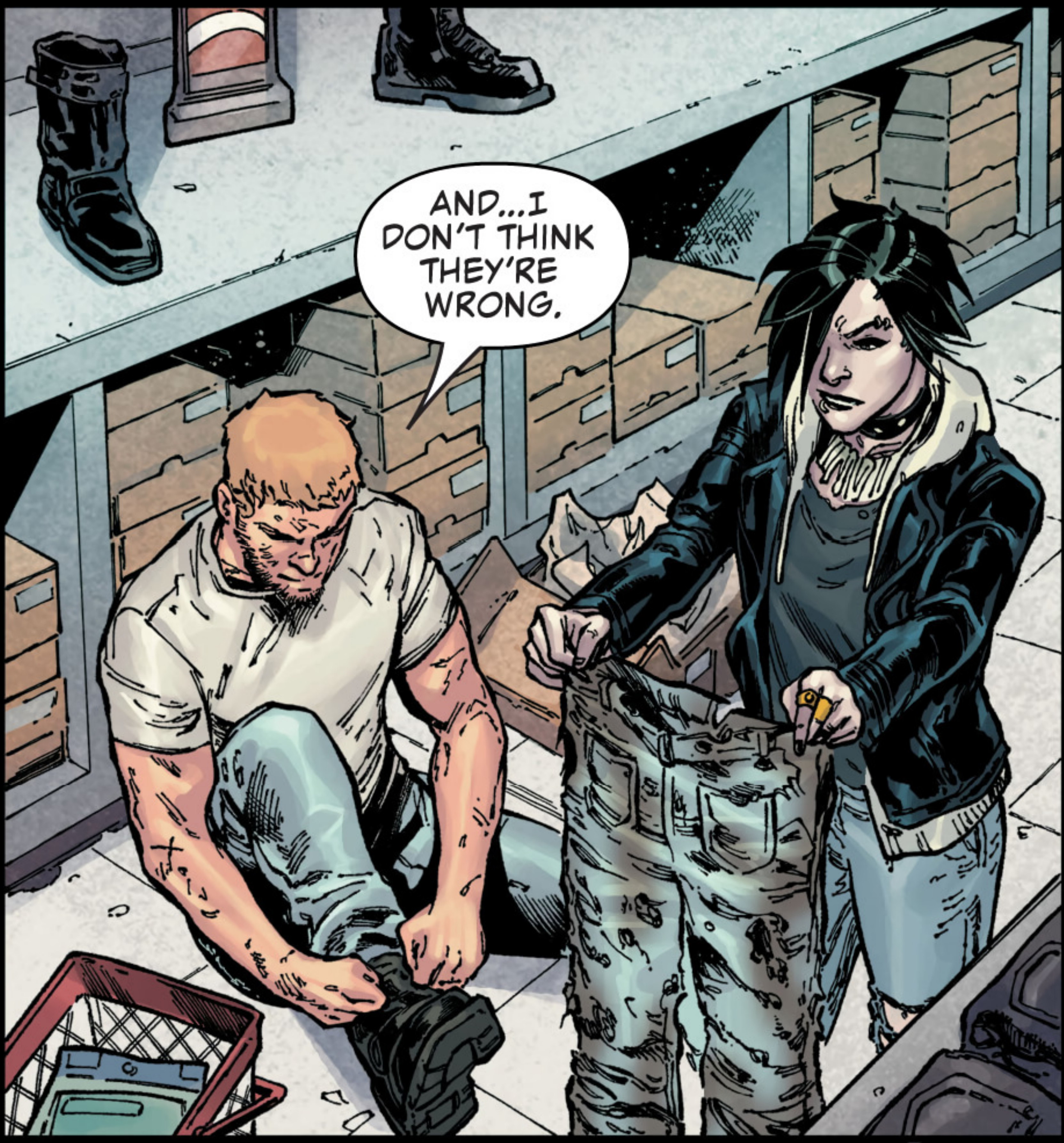

YOU...YOU'VE RUINED ALL OUR GOOD WORK HERE...

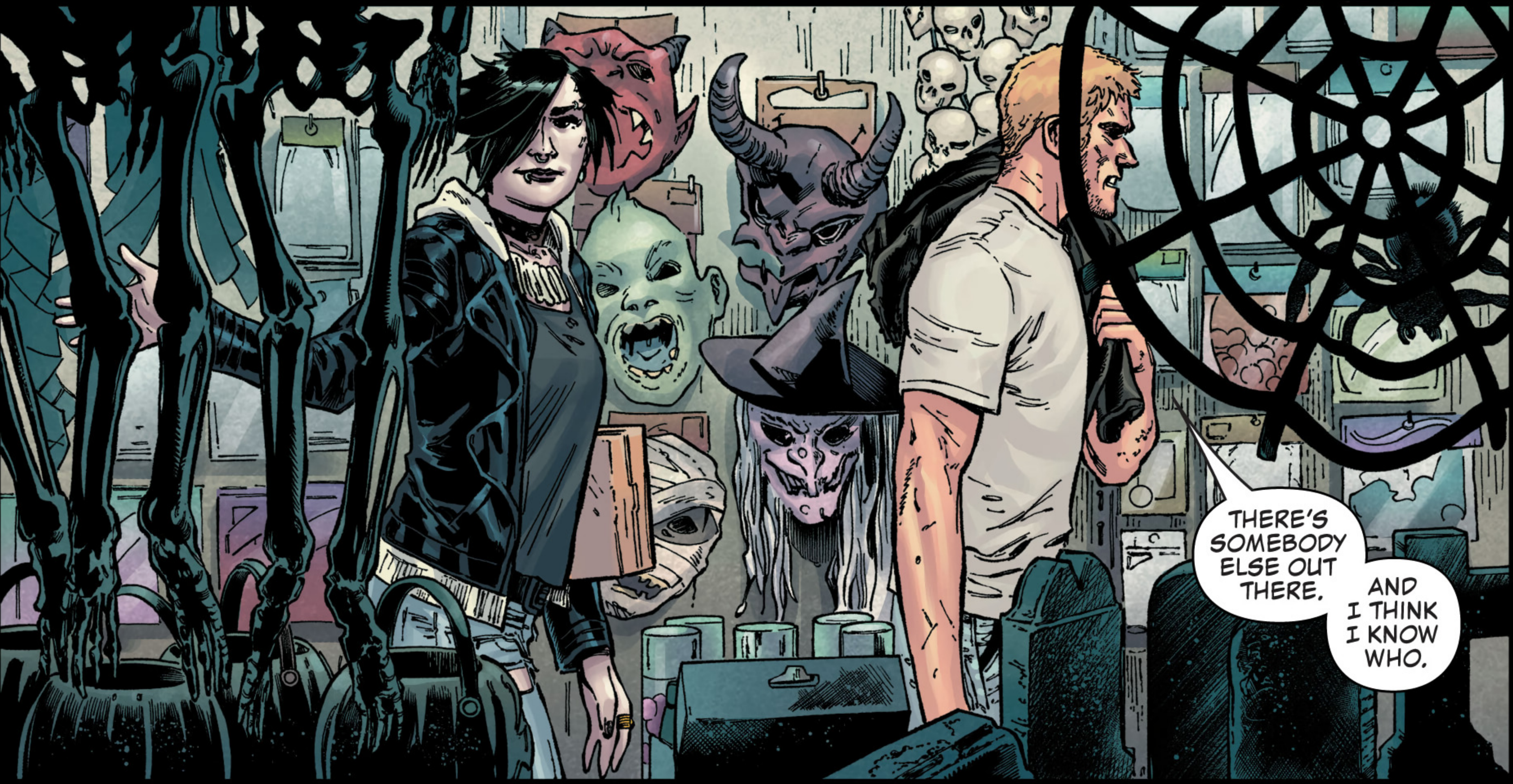

THERE WAS ONLY A SECOND MORE OF LIFE LEFT IN ITS BODY, AND IN THAT TIME, WE ATE BRIEFLY OF ITS SIN.

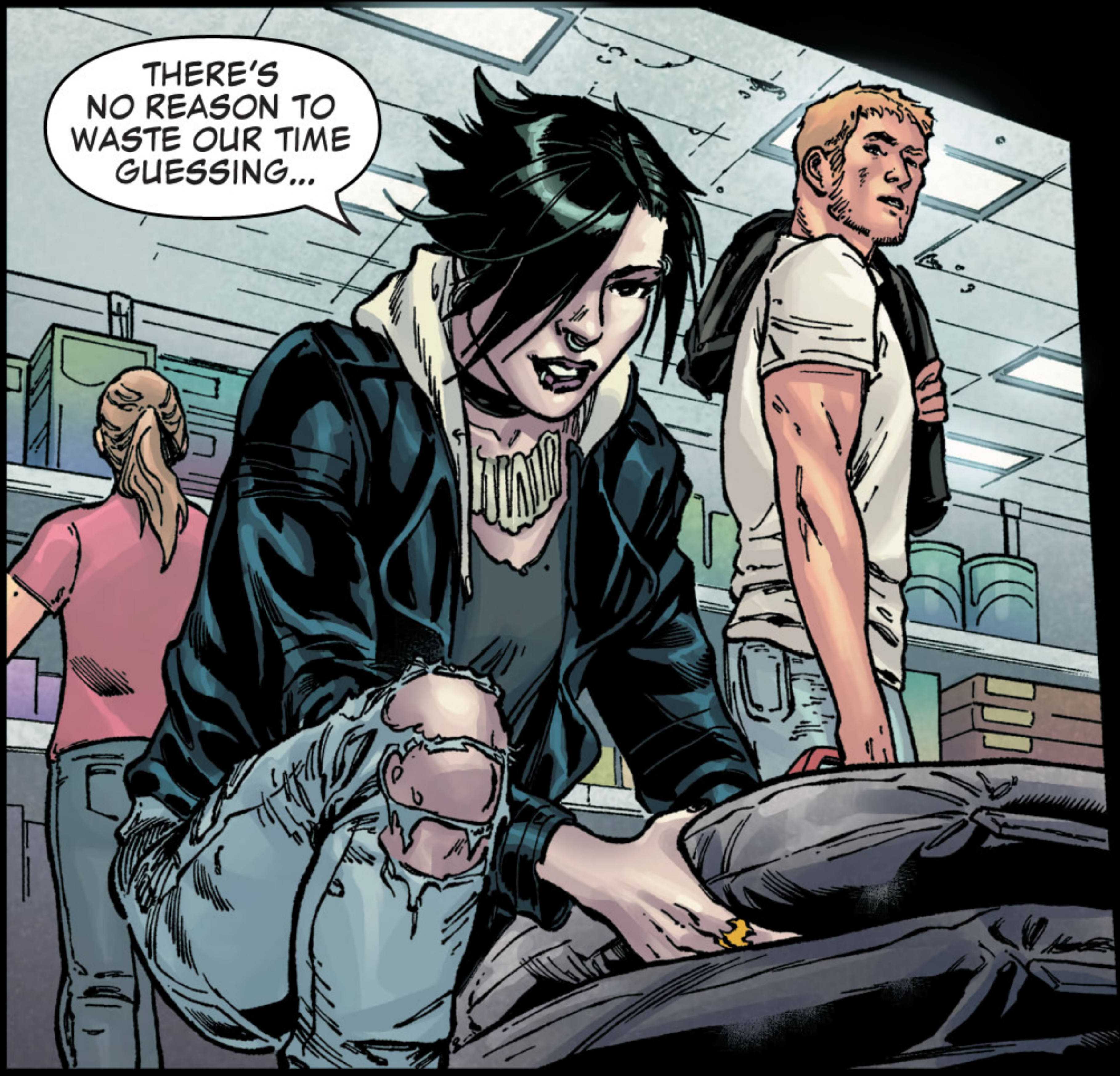

I SAW ITS FINAL NIGHTMARE.
THE FIGURE IT SHOWED ME...
...FELT AS FAMILIAR AS A *BROTHER.*

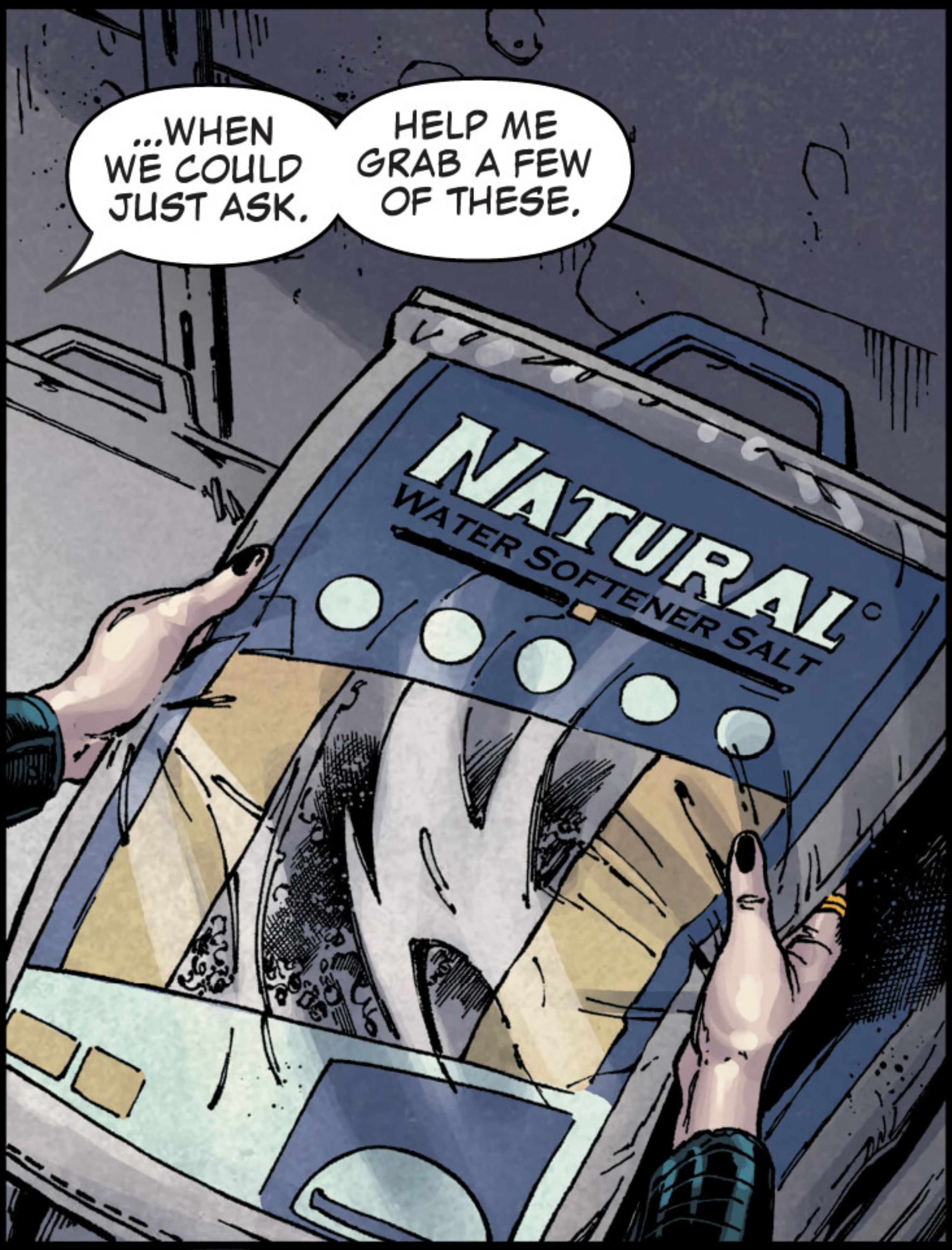
FIFTY MILES NORTH OF SAVANNAH.
DARREN'S HARDWARE
WHEN THE RIDER TAKES OVER MY BODY, BAD THINGS HAPPEN.
LAWN CARE
CARS CRASH. A STREET GETS TORN UP. A BUILDING GETS TRASHED.
MONSTERS DIE. AND SOMETIMES...
...SOMETIMES THOSE MONSTERS ARE PEOPLE.
BUT THE CATACLYSM WE SAW IN SAVANNAH...THAT WAS NEXT-LEVEL CHAOS, SCORCHED-EARTH PUNISHMENT.
THE DEMONS BLAMED *ME*.
DON'T TOUCH THAT!


THEY BLAMED A GHOST RIDER AT LEAST.
WORK EAR


AND...I DON'T THINK THEY'RE WRONG.


THERE'S SOMEBODY ELSE OUT THERE.
AND I THINK I KNOW WHO.


THERE'S NO REASON TO WASTE OUR TIME GUESSING...


...WHEN WE COULD JUST ASK.
HELP ME GRAB A FEW OF THESE.
NATURAL
WATER SOFTENER SALT

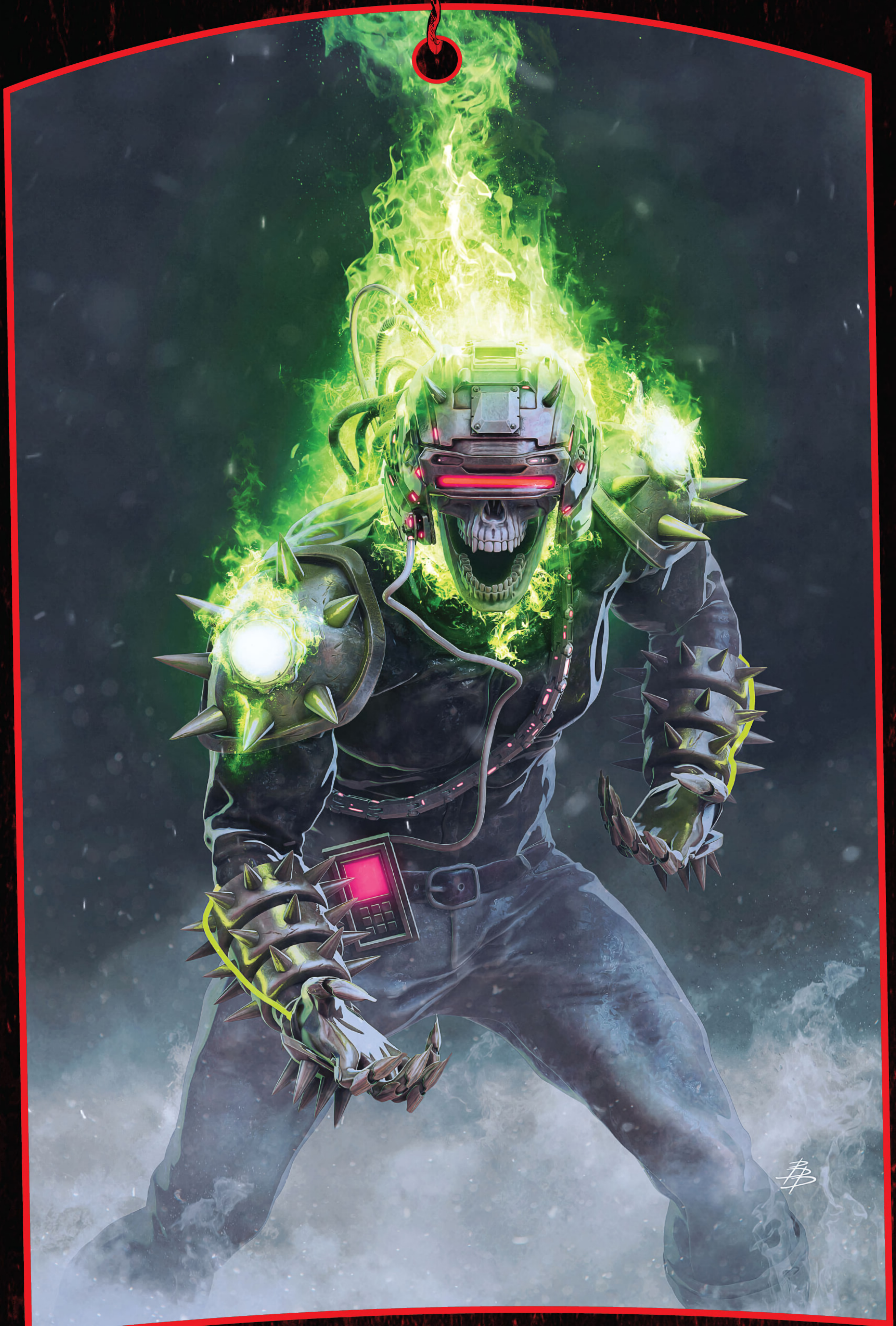
WE TOLD THE MOTEL CLERK WE NEEDED A TUB.
A BIG ONE.
The Romance MOTEL
Vibrating Beds
Free Sensual Lotions
THEY GAVE US THE HONEYMOON SUITE.
NATURAL
NATURAL
THANKFULLY, THEY RENTED BY THE HOUR.
THAT'S THE LAST OF THE SALT.
ALL DONE.
NOT QUITE. GIVE ME YOUR HAND.
#$%@!
SLLK

IT'S A BLOOD SPELL.
I'M GOING TO TAP INTO THE HEART OR WOMB OF YOU, I GUESS YOU COULD SAY.
I NEED TO FLOAT TO GET INTO THE TRANCE STATE REQUIRED OF ME.
I'LL BE ABLE TO SENSE EVERYONE CONNECTED TO YOU.
ALL THE BLOOD THAT BINDS THE ARTERIES OR BRANCHES OF YOUR FAMILIES.
BY THAT, I MEAN YOURS...
...AND THE GHOST RIDER'S.

"I SEE THE MAN YOU INHERITED YOUR BLOOD FROM... ***BARTON.***
"I SEE THE WOMAN YOU GAVE YOUR BLOOD TO...***ROXANNE.***
"I SEE THE CHILDREN YOU BUILT FROM YOUR BLOOD... ***CRAIG*** AND ***EMMA.***
"AND I SEE ***HIM.***
"I SEE YOUR BROTHER.
"I SEE ***DANNY.***"

I SEE HIS BODY ANYWAY.
BUT HE'S *DIFFERENT* NOW, JOHNNY.
"IN A WAY...HE MIGHT AS WELL BE *DEAD*."

NUMBER THIRTEEN



SIX MONTHS AGO. SOMEWHERE IN NEW JERSEY.
THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE. YOU'LL NEVER MAKE IT.
LONELY NIGHTS
BAR
OR AT LEAST THAT'S WHAT THE KID SAID TO ME.
I WAS MAYBE 7, POSSIBLY 10. WHO KNOWS? I HAD A BMX BACK THEN. AND I HAD SET UP THIS JUMP.
THE JUMP WAS ON THE ROOF OF A FOUR-STORY APARTMENT BUILDING. SO ROUGHLY FORTY-FIVE, FIFTY FEET IN THE AIR, YEAH?
THE IDEA WAS, I WOULD CLEAR THE ALLEY, LAND ON THE NEIGHBORING ROOF.
PRETTY STUPID MAYBE, BUT THERE WAS TEN BUCKS ON THE LINE, AND TEN BUCKS IS A MILLION DOLLARS TO A KID.
JUST A MINUTE AGO, YOU TOLD ME THIS WAS AN IMPOSSIBLE SHOT.
BUT YOU'VE NEVER SEEN ME JUMP.
I CLEARED THAT ALLEY. FLEW LIKE A #$%& EAGLE.

I CRASHED HARD. BROKE MY RIGHT LEG AND LEFT WRIST WHEN I LANDED.
BUT I MADE IT.
AND I COLLECTED THAT SWEET, GREEN MONEY.
YOU HUSTLED ME, PUNK!
PLEASE, DUDE. THERE'S NO NEED TO HAVE A TEMPER TANTRUM. IT'S UNBECOMING.
YOU COULD HAVE JUST SAID DOUBLE OR NOTHING.
NGHHH!
ZZT ZZT
DANIEL KETCH?
UM, YEAH?
MAY I BUY YOU A DRINK?
ZZT

I DON'T KNOW WHO LOOKED MORE SURPRISED...
...ME AFTER YOU TASED THAT DUDE OR THE BARTENDER WHEN YOU ORDERED A CABERNET.
IT TOOK SOME LOOKING, BUT HE FINALLY FOUND A BOTTLE IN THE BACK.
JUST LIKE IT TOOK SOME LOOKING, BUT I FINALLY FOUND *YOU.*
YEAH. ABOUT THAT.
IS THIS ABOUT ME, OR IS THIS ABOUT...?
IT'S ABOUT... *BOTH* OF YOU.
YOU'VE GOT GOOD *SPIRIT*, AS THEY SAY.
WHAT DO YOU WANT, *DR. DIYU?*
WELL...I WAS GOING TO SAY I HAVE A PROPOSITION FOR YOU.
BUT HOW ABOUT I PUT IT THIS WAY INSTEAD?
I HAVE A *WAGER.*
CLINK
NOW YOU'RE TALKING.

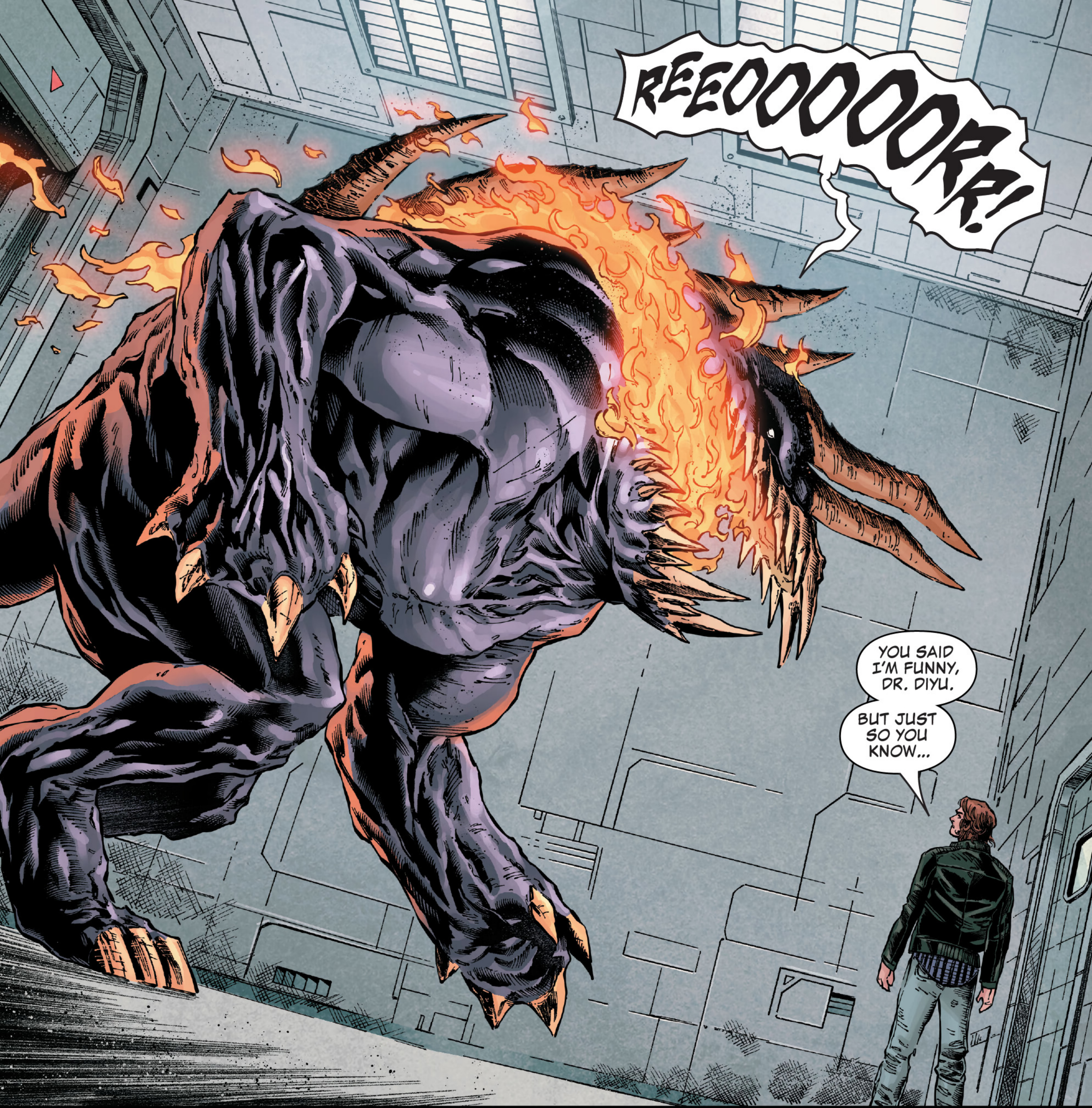
PRESENT DAY. MYRTLE BEACH, SOUTH CAROLINA.
SO, IT WAS SOME KIND OF SEX CLUB?
RED PARADISE
SEX WAS PART OF IT. SO WERE DRUGS.
SO WAS BLOOD AND DEMONIC WORSHIP.
THEY HAD HIRED OUT A DJ NAMED THE RAM.
HE WAS KNOWN FOR PRODUCING BEATS HE CALLED THE PULSE OF HELL. THEY GAVE PEOPLE VISIONS. THEY INVITED POSSESSION.
IF THEY HAD LIVED, THEY WOULD HAVE LEFT A LEGION.
TALIA... $#%&...
HOW MANY DIED IN THE FIRE?
HUNDREDS, JOHNNY.

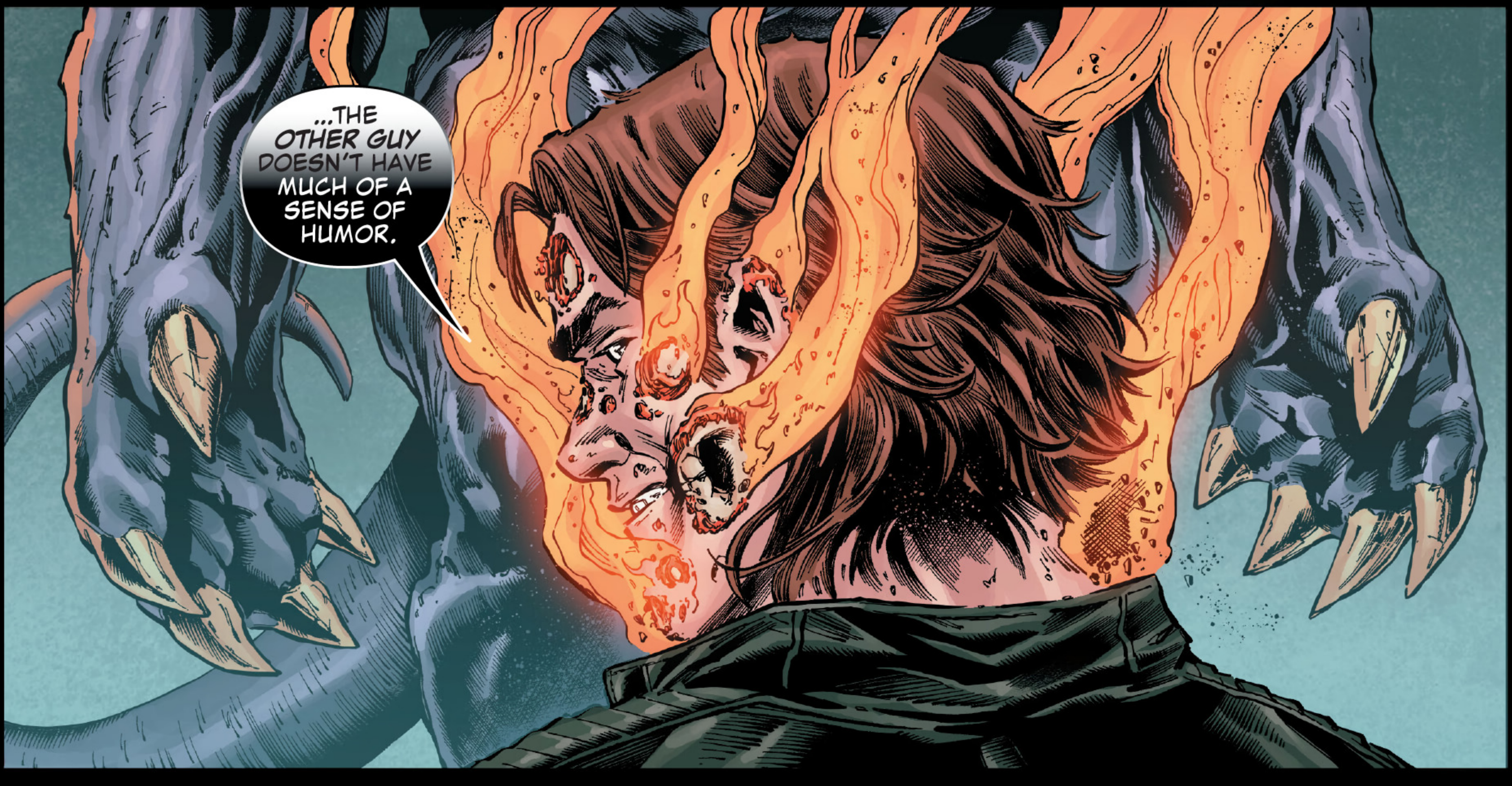
I CAN STILL SMELL THEIR SWEAT...
"I CAN STILL FEEL THE PULSE OF THE MUSIC..."
THERE WAS A SCREECH OF FEEDBACK. THEN EVERYTHING WENT SILENT. AND DARK.
AND THE SCREAMS TOOK OVER.
"THE FIRE SWEPT THROUGH THE BUILDING IN SECONDS."

ONLY ONE PERSON SURVIVED. SHE HAS THIRD-DEGREE BURNS ACROSS HER ENTIRE BODY AND ISN'T EXPECTED TO MAKE IT.
SHOW ME.
"THE EXIT WAS BLOCKED BY... SOMETHING... *SOMEONE.*
EXIT
"A MAN WHO WAS NOT A MAN.
"A MAN WHOSE FACE AND HANDS WERE MADE OF FLAME."
THAT'S NOT...
HE WOULDN'T *DO* THAT...
DANNY, WHAT THE HELL HAPPENED TO YOU?

OH, YUM. I WAS WONDERING WHAT WAS FOR DINNER.
SIX MONTHS AGO. INFERNAL LABS.
DEMON CHARCUTERIE.
YOU ARE FUNNY, DANIEL.
IT'S *DANNY.*
I IMAGINE YOU HAVE TO MAINTAIN A SENSE OF HUMOR TO... ENDURE THE DARKER ELEMENTS OF YOUR LIFE.
SO, HOW DOES THIS WHOLE THING WORK?
INFERNAL LABS IS A PRIVATE RESEARCH GROUP DEVOTED TO STUDYING THE BIOLOGY, GEOLOGY, CHEMISTRY AND PHYSICS OF **HELL.**
THAT I CAN SEE. IT'S THE "WHY" I'M TRYING TO WRAP MY BRAIN AROUND.
WHY DO PALEONTOLOGISTS DIG THROUGH SOIL AND TIME? WHY DO OCEANOGRAPHERS SINK THEIR VESSELS INTO TRENCHES?
WOULDN'T YOU AGREE IT'S IMPORTANT TO KNOW THE WORLD ABOVE ***AND*** BELOW?
DEPENDS.
DR. DIYU, YOU DIDN'T MENTION THE PSYCHOLOGY OF HELL AS PART OF YOUR STUDIES. I HAPPEN TO HAVE DONE A LITTLE RESEARCH.
ZEEP

AND MONEY AND POWER--THEY TEND TO HAVE *CORRUPTING* EFFECTS ON FOLKS.
I DON'T SUPPOSE YOU'RE TRYING TO PATENT ANYTHING IN HERE? SELL SOME WEAPONS? HELLFIRE FLAMETHROWER MAYBE?
I HAVE NO INTEREST IN MONEY OUTSIDE OF SUPPORTING MY WORK.
MY RESEARCH IS...MORE *PERSONAL.*
OH $#%@. WHAT HAPP--?
I HOPE YOU DON'T MIND, DANIEL, BUT I FEEL LIKE I'M ONLY HAVING *HALF* A CONVERSATION.
ZEEP
THE #%$& IS THIS?
I WOULD LIKE TO SPEAK WITH THE *SPIRIT,* PLEASE.
SHOW ME WHAT HE CAN DO. I'M HAPPY TO PAY YOU FOR YOUR TIME.
YEAH? THIS ANOTHER ONE OF THOSE TEN-DOLLAR BETS THAT LEAVES ME BUSTED-UP?


REEOOOOORR!
YOU SAID I'M FUNNY, DR. DIYU.
BUT JUST SO YOU KNOW...


...THE OTHER GUY DOESN'T HAVE MUCH OF A SENSE OF HUMOR.

PRESENT DAY.
YES, WE KNOW VISITING HOURS ARE OVER. AND, NO, WE'RE NOT FAMILY.
GEORGETOWN MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
BUT THAT'S OKAY. YOU'RE HAPPY TO HELP US.
HERE ARE YOUR PASSES. YOU'RE LOOKING FOR MINDY BRENNER. SECOND FLOOR. BURN UNIT. ROOM THREE.
DON'T EVER DO THAT MIND-CONTROL CRAP TO ME.
THEN AGREE TO ALWAYS DO THINGS MY WAY.
OH @#$%.
HEY THERE. MINDY? I'M SURE YOU'RE FEELING ABSOLUTELY #$%@& MISERABLE RIGHT NOW. BUT WE NEED YOUR HELP.
TELL US MORE ABOUT THE KILLER. THE MAN WITH THE *BURNING SKULL.*
NOT... -KOFF-... COPS...?

NO. WE'RE DEFINITELY NOT COPS.
DID HE SAY ANYTHING? DID YOU SEE ANYTHING THAT MIGHT HELP US FIND HIM?
I...DIDN'T WANT...TO GO... KOFF
I... KOFF ... DON'T WANT... TO GO... KOFF
...TO HELL.
BEEP BEEP
KOFF ... BOYFRIEND... KOFF KOFF MADE ME...
IT'S OKAY.
IS IT? THIS CLUB WASN'T FULL OF INNOCENTS. HER BOYFRIEND--A GUY WHO WENT BY THE NAME OF SULFUR--APPARENTLY HAD A BLOOD ALTAR IN HIS BASEMENT.
HE'S THE ONE WHO DID THE KILLING, BUT SHE STOOD BY HIM.
BEEP BEEP
GOING... KOFF ... TO HELL...
WHAT IF I TOLD YOU I COULD CLEANSE YOU OF SIN? IF YOU HELPED US?
...PRIEST...?
NOT A COP AND NOT A PRIEST.
I'M SOMETHING BETTER AND SOMETHING WORSE.
SMOKE... KOFF ... THROAT...
YOU WANT WATER?
PAPE-- KOFF KOFF ... PAPER.

NEED A PEN.
-KOFF KOFF KOFF-
I... -KOFF-
DON'T WANT... -KOFF KOFF-...TO SEE THAT DEMON AGAIN.
DON'T WANT... -KOFF KOFF KOFF-... TO GO TO HELL.
IF I'M GOING TO HELP HER, I'LL NEED THE RIDER. CAN YOU GIVE ME A KICK-START?
NO NEED.
BEEEEEEEEEEP
IT'S TOO LATE FOR HER.
IF THIS IS ACCURATE, HIS GEAR LOOKS TECH-MODIFIED.
BEFORE THE MUSIC IN THE CLUB WENT QUIET... BEFORE THE ATTACK... THE LIGHTS SHUT OFF AND THERE WAS A FEEDBACK SCREECH.
LOOKING AT THIS HELMET...WHAT IF THOSE AREN'T HORNS?
WHAT IF THEY'RE *ANTENNAS?*

SIX MONTHS AGO.
INFERNAL LABS.
DANIEL?
DANIEL, WAKE UP.
UGH. WAS IT AS GOOD FOR YOU AS IT WAS FOR ME?
YOU DID VERY WELL. IT WAS A FASCINATING DEMONSTRATION. THANK YOU.
HOW DO YOU FEEL?
LIKE @#$% ON HOT PAVEMENT.
IS THAT NORMAL? AFTER YOU TRANSFORM?
HELLFIRE HANGOVER? YEAH. AIN'T EASY ON THE BODY OR SOUL.
LET'S REST IN MY OFFICE. CAN I OFFER YOU SOMETHING? SOME COFFEE? A SODA?
OR SOMETHING STRONGER?

YOU'RE LIVING WITH A CURSE.
BUT WHAT IF YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO?
SORRY-- WHAT?
TAKE A LOOK AT THIS.
WHAT AM I LOOKING AT?
A DAMAGE REPORT.
ALL THE DAMAGE YOU'VE DONE OVER THE YEARS TO ROADWAYS, BUILDINGS AND VEHICLES--IT AMOUNTS TO MILLIONS. AND THAT DOESN'T EVEN ACCOUNT FOR THE PEOPLE--
I'VE SAVED SOME LIVES ALONG THE WAY TOO, YOU KNOW.
LIVES HAVE BEEN SAVED, YES, BUT LIVES HAVE BEEN *LOST.*
YOU SCARED A WOMAN NAMED KATELYN GREGOR INTO HAVING A HEART ATTACK. A MAN NAMED BRUCE BOYLE CAREENED OFF THE ROAD AND HIT A TREE WHEN YOU BLAZED BY HIM. A CHILD--
THAT'S BULL!
I ASSURE YOU IT IS TRUE.
AND THEN THERE'S THE TOLL ON YOU. PHYSICALLY. MENTALLY.

I DID YOUR STUPID LITTLE EXPERIMENT. YOU SAID THERE WAS SOMETHING IN IT FOR ME?
BECAUSE I'M READY TO COLLECT AND GET THE #$%& OUT OF HERE.
WHAT IF I TOLD YOU... YOU DON'T HAVE TO LIVE WITH A MONSTER ON YOUR BACK?
I THINK I CAN HELP YOU.
BET THAT MEANS YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING TO GAIN.
NATURALLY.
WHO'S THIS, ANYWAY?
THAT'S A PHOTO OF ME AND MY BROTHER, DELUN. WHEN HE WAS 14, HE WAS POSSESSED BY A *DEMON.*
MY PARENTS HIRED AN EXORCIST, BUT DURING THE RITUAL, HE THREW HIMSELF OUT OF A WINDOW AND BROKE HIS NECK.
THAT HOW YOU GOT THAT SCAR YOU SHOWED ME?
THERE ARE THE SCARS WE CARRY ON THE OUTSIDE, AND THERE ARE THE SCARS WE CARRY ON THE INSIDE.
HIS MEMORY HELPS REMIND ME WHY I'M DOING WHAT I'M DOING.
AND WHAT IS THAT, EXACTLY?

THE RESEARCH I'M DOING HERE REQUIRES FUNDING FROM PRIVATE DONORS AND GOVERNMENT GRANTS.
I'VE RECEIVED A SOFT PROMISE OF TWENTY MILLION IF I CAN SUCCESSFULLY ENLIST YOU AS A SUBJECT.
YOU'RE OFFERING ME MONEY?
NO. I'M OFFERING YOU FREEDOM.
AT THE END OF THIS TRIAL, I WILL SEPARATE YOU FROM THE SPIR--
STOP!
HE MIGHT HEAR...
...AND YOU *DON'T* WANT TO MAKE HIM ANGRY.
WE DON'T HAVE TO TALK ABOUT IT.
IN FACT... YOU CAN READ ABOUT IT RIGHT HERE.
INFERNAL LABS
INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR AGREEMENT
I'LL JUST NEED A SIGNATURE.
AND THEN YOU CAN START EARNING YOUR LIFE BACK.

PRESENT DAY.
THE AIR IS FULL OF GHOSTS.
DIGI COM DATA CENTER
RADIO AND TV AND CELL SIGNALS.
WHITE NOISE, SOME PEOPLE CALL IT.
SECURITY
BUT I GUESS YOU COULD SAY THERE'S BLACK NOISE TOO.
THE WHISPERING OF THE DEAD. THE HOWLING OF DEMONS.
IT'S INFORMATION, JUST LIKE ANYTHING ELSE. JUST RELAYED ON A DARKER FREQUENCY.
IF THAT HELMET IS SOME SORT OF TRANSMITTER, IT WOULD HAVE PINGED THE TOWER A FEW BLOCKS AWAY FROM THE CLUB.
AND EVERYTHING THAT HITS A TOWER FLOWS THROUGH THESE DATA CABINETS.
HOLD ON. I THINK I'VE GOT--
@#$%.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH HER?
SHE HEARD SOMETHING SHE WASN'T READY FOR.
YOU SURE YOU SHOULD DO THAT?
SHHH.
BLARRG!
WHAT DID YOU HEAR?
I CAN'T... -GASP- I DON'T HAVE WORDS FOR IT.
LET'S SEE WHAT KIND OF HEAVY METAL THEY'RE PLAYING.
HARRRRR!

I HEARD A DARK SONG.
CRSSSH
WHAT-- WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
I HEARD THE CALL OF THE BROTHER.
AND I OFFER AN ANSWER.

ALL RIGHT, DANIEL. WE'RE GOING TO BEGIN ANOTHER--
DZZZZZT
WHAT HAPPENED?
I THINK WE'VE BEEN FOUND.
I THINK WE'VE BEEN WARNED.
AND I THINK WE SHOULD PREPARE FOR VISITORS.

NUMBER FOURTEEN

INFERNAL LABS.
FOUR MONTHS AGO.
THIS IS GOING TO HURT, DANIEL.
I CAN TAKE IT.
ZEEEEEEEEEEM
GOOD.
GIVE IT THIRTY SECONDS...
...AND THEN...
ZEEEEEEEEM
...LET'S IGNITE AGAIN.
ANOTHER BREATHER...
ZEEEEEEEI
...AND LET'S IGNITE ONCE MORE.

PATIENT REPORT?
I THINK WE'D BETTER GIVE HIM A BREAK, DR. DIYU.
HEART RATE IS AT 200. TEMPERATURE AT 115. OXYGEN, 76.
GLUCOSE... 45 AND DROPPING.
LET'S GET HIM INTO A NUTRIENT-RICH BATH UNTIL HE STABILIZES.
HOW SUCCESSFUL WERE WE THIS TIME? WITH THE SPIRIT?
HELLFIRE THERMOCOUPLE
CALORIMETER: 3,000 degrees
THE SPIRIT IS NOT ONLY HIGHLY UNSTABLE, BUT ALSO BOUND *TIGHTLY* WITH ITS HOST.
THE COLLECTION PROCESS IS GOING SLOWER THAN EXPECTED!
IN FACT, AT THIS RATE, FULL SEVERANCE COULD TAKE *YEARS!*

I'VE LOST TOO MANY YEARS ALREADY.

NOW.
JOHNNY...
...THIS IS GOING TO HURT...
...BUT IT'S TIME.
UGGHHH.
SHOULD I POUR YOU A MUG? OR JUST DUMP THE CARAFE DOWN YOUR THROAT?
HOW LONG HAVE I BEEN OUT?
THREE DAYS.
WHAT?!

@#$%.
EASY THERE.
WHAT HAPPENED?
AT THE DATA CENTER, WE PINPOINTED A SIGNAL. A **DARK SIGNAL** TRANSMITTED TO AND FROM DANNY'S HELMET.
THE RIDER TAPPED INTO THE FREQUENCY AND SENT OUT A BLAST TO THE POINT OF ORIGIN.
YOU CERTAINLY GOT THEIR ATTENTION, BECAUSE THEY HIT YOU BACK.
IT WAS LIKE SOMEBODY YANKED THE KEYS OUT OF YOUR IGNITION.
YOU DROPPED TO THE FLOOR.
I'M @#$% STILL THERE.
WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED IN THE MEANTIME?
YOU... SMELL LIKE ROADKILL.
GET YOURSELF CLEANED UP AND WE'LL TALK ABOUT NEXT STEPS.

YOU KNOW HOW TENDER THE EXPOSED SKIN FEELS AFTER YOU CUT YOUR NAILS TOO TIGHT?
THAT'S HOW MY WHOLE BODY FEELS AFTER THE RIDER POSSESSES ME.
IN A WAY, THAT'S HOW MY **HEART** FEELS NOW THAT I'VE LEARNED ABOUT DANNY. ***RAW.***
MY BROTHER IN BLOOD...
...AND ***SPIRIT.***

HEY.
I BEEN THINKING...
...AND I'M A LITTLE WORRIED ABOUT THIS ONE, JOHNNY.
NOBODY WINS WHEN YOU'RE FIGHTING SOMEBODY YOU LOVE.
SO MOVE THE #$%& OVER--
--AND MAKE THIS COUNT...
...JUST IN CASE WE DON'T GET ANOTHER CHANCE.

INFERNAL LABS. THREE MONTHS AGO.
HOW ARE YOU DOING, DANIEL?
TANK IS FILLING UP AGAIN, I GUESS.
BUT DAMN, YOU ALL ARE DOING A NUMBER ON ME.
WE ALL KNEW THIS PROCESS WAS GOING TO BE LONG AND DIFFICULT. BUT I KNOW IT WILL BE WORTH IT IN THE END. FOR BOTH OF US.
ABOUT THAT. YOU...MENTIONED YOUR BROTHER BEFORE? THE ONE WHO GOT POSSESSED?
DELUN, YES.
TELL ME MORE ABOUT THAT WHOLE DEAL, WOULD YOU?
WHY?
I'M FEELING COMPLETELY NAKED HERE, SHARING MY DEMONS.
ONLY FAIR YOU SHARE YOURS.

"DELUN WENT INTO A BATHROOM AND FOUND A MAN FURIOUSLY WASHING HIS HANDS AT THE SINK.
GOTTA CLEAN IT OFF. GOTTA CLEAN.
GOTTA CLEAN. CAN'T GET CLEAN.
GOTTA CLEAN IT OFF.
CAN'T GET CLEAN BECAUSE IT'S IN ME.
IN ME DEEP.
TOO DEEP TO CLEAN.
-GASP-
GOTTA GET CLEAN.
RATTLE RATTLE

GOTTA GET IT OUT OF ME!
AAAIIEEE!
YOU TAKE IT, BOY! I GOTTA GET CLEAN!!!
"WHEN MY FATHER WENT TO CHECK ON DELUN SEVERAL MINUTES LATER, HE FOUND HIM ALONE IN THE BATHROOM."
SPIDER MAN SUCKS!
KIX
DELUN? IS EVERYTHING OKAY?
GOTTA GET CLEAN.

WHERE WERE *YOU* DURING ALL OF THIS?
I WAS IN MED SCHOOL, STUDYING TO BE AN ONCOLOGIST.
I KNEW EVERYTHING ABOUT CARVING AND POISONING CANCERS OUT OF BODIES, BUT I COULDN'T DO ANYTHING FOR HIM.
WHEN HE DIED...I HAD NEVER FELT SO HELPLESS.
BUT I CHANGED MY COURSE OF STUDY...
...TO THE *SCIENCE* OF DEMONOLOGY.
AND NOW... NOW I CAN HELP YOU, DANIEL.
YEAH? WELL... THANKS. BUT WHO'S HELPING *YOU*?
BECAUSE IT SEEMS LIKE MAYBE YOU'VE GOT SOME...YOU KNOW... UNRESOLVED $#%& GOING ON?
OH, WELL, EVERYTHING WILL BE RESOLVED SOON ENOUGH.

"YOU SEE...I'M GOING TO GET MY BROTHER BACK."
SLEEP LIKE THE DEAD INN
REPAIR CREWS HAVE BEEN WORKING OVERTIME. EVERY CELLULAR NETWORK FOR TWO HUNDRED MILES WAS KNOCKED OUT BY THAT BLAST.
THE DATA CENTER'S LOG REVEALED THE SIGNAL WAS CLOAKED AND TRANSFERRED THROUGH SEVERAL VPN SERVERS.
WE NEVER GOT AN IP ADDRESS. BUT WE GOT A CITY-- MOUNTAIN VIEW, CALIFORNIA.
A TECH HUB. AND HOME OF *INFERNAL LABS,* A RESEARCH START-UP DEVOTED TO THE APPLIED SCIENCES OF HELL.
SOUNDS LIKE ANOTHER WORD FOR *WEAPONS.*
YEP.
READY TO SADDLE UP?
MORE THAN READY. CAN'T BELIEVE WE'VE LOST SO MUCH TIME.
THEN HERE YOU GO.
THESE ARE *MOTORCYCLE KEYS.*
NO @#$%?
NO @#$%.

MUCH AS I LOVE YOUR COMPANY, YOU BELONG ON A ***BIKE.***
YOU DIDN'T PAY FOR THIS, DID YOU?
NOPE.
NOPE.
DO I EVEN WANT TO KNOW?
TALIA...
DON'T GET SAPPY OR SENTIMENTAL ON ME. IT'S EMBARRASSING.
HELL YEAH.

INFERNAL LABS.
TWO MONTHS AGO.
DAMN IT.
CAN'T YOU JUST IGNORE IT?
RRRING
UNFORTUNATELY, NO.
F.B.I. HEADQUARTERS.
WASHINGTON, DC.
DR. DIYU... WE'VE GOT ANOTHER JOB FOR YOU.
BUT I'M BUSY, DIRECTOR CRUX.
HE'S BUSY.
THIS WAS THE DEAL.
WE KEEP THE LIGHTS ON AT INFERNAL LABS BY FUNDING YOUR LITTLE PROJECTS...
"...SO LONG AS YOU SEND OUT YOUR HUNTING DOG WHEN WE TELL YOU TO."

WE CAN'T SEND HIM OUT LIKE THIS.
WE DON'T HAVE A CHOICE.
I'LL DOSE HIM UP WITH ENOUGH ADRENALINE TO WAKE THE DEAD.
SHK
GAK!
I FEEL LIKE... I'M GETTING RUBBED AWAY, MAN.
YOU'RE DOING GREAT. JUST HOLD ON A LITTLE LONGER AND YOU CAN REST.
FEEL LIKE I GOT NOTHING BUT FUMES IN MY TANK, MAN.

I DON'T KNOW...IF I CAN KEEP DOING THIS.
NO...
NO, I DON'T WANT TO.
YOU SIGNED UP FOR THIS EXPERIMENT.
AND WE'RE GOING TO SEE IT THROUGH TO ITS END.
@#$%, MAN... I'M SICK.
CHARGE UP THE REMOTE.
WHERE DO THEY WANT US TO SEND HIM?
THERE'S APPARENTLY A *VAMPIRE* OUTBREAK IN ALASKA.
HOPEFULLY, HE'LL BE IN AND OUT WITHOUT MUCH TIME OR TROUBLE.
ENGAGE.
CLIK

AIIIEEEE!
CHK
CHK
UPLOADING COORDINATES AND MISSION AGENDA.
I GET THE FEELING HE HATES US...
THAT'S IRRELEVANT.
OPEN THE BLAST DOORS.
"COME BACK TO US SOON, DANIEL.
"WE HAVE SO MUCH LEFT TO DO."

ALASKA.
ONE MONTH AGO.
PRRRING
SAVANNAH.
TWO WEEKS AGO.
RRRRING
SOUTH CAROLINA.
ONE WEEK AGO.
RRRRIN

JUNE
KUNCH
CALL UP THE SECURITY CAMERAS FOR THE SOUTH FENCE.
WHY?
BECAUSE I TOLD YOU TO! BECAUSE THEY'RE HERE!
WE KNEW THEY WOULD COME.
AND NOW THE TIME FOR CAUTION AND PATIENCE IS OVER.

WE FINISH THE SEVERANCE NOW.
I DON'T CARE IF IT **KILLS** DANIEL KETCH.
INHABIT MY ARMOR WITH THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT.
OPEN THE GATES OF HELL.
I'M COMING FOR YOU, DELUN.

NUMBER FIFTEEN

INFERNAL LABS. MOUNTAIN VIEW, CALIFORNIA.
I KNOW DANNY'S IN THERE, BUT SO IS WHATEVER'S CONTROLLING HIM.
IF YOU'RE ASKING ME TO HANG BACK, TALIA, THAT'S NOT HAPPENING. NO WAY IN--
INFERNAL LABS
--HELL!
DOOOOOM
YOU OKAY?
SEEING DOUBLE. MIGHT HAVE RUPTURED AN EARDRUM. BUT, YEAH.

DANNY?!
CAN YOU GET ME SOME LIGHT?
LUMEN.
DANNY?! DANNY, TALK TO ME!
I'M NOT GETTING A PULSE.

DON'T YOU DIE ON ME, DANNY. DON'T YOU DARE.
DAMN IT, DANNY!
FLIK
KOFF KOFF
KOFF
IF YOU DON'T STAY ALIVE LONG ENOUGH TO TELL US WHAT THE @#$% IS GOING ON...I'LL KILL YOU TWICE.
SECRETO.
SHOW ME.

"DANNY SIGNED HIS LIFE AWAY TO INFERNAL LABS...
"...BECAUSE THEY PROMISED TO END THE CURSE.
"THEY PROMISED TO SEVER THE SPIRIT OF CORRUPTION FROM HIM.
"BUT AS JOHNNY KNOWS ALL TOO WELL...
"...WHEN THE SPIRIT LIVES INSIDE YOU LONG ENOUGH, IT BECOMES AS VITAL AS AN ORGAN.
"YOU CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT IT.

"DR. DIYU LOST HER BROTHER TO A DEMONIC POSSESSION.
"BY WEAPONIZING THE SPIRIT, SHE PLANS TO FIGHT HER WAY THROUGH HELL..."
...AND DRAG HIM BACK HOME.

COME ON!
I'VE LOST TOO MUCH OF MY FAMILY!
CRASH...
...ROXANNE...
...CRAIG AND EMMA...
...I'M NOT LOSING MY #$%& BROTHER...
LET ME.

WHEN I TELL YOU WHAT'S HAPPENING, YOU'RE GOING TO CHANGE.
BUT I JUST WANT TO TALK TO JOHNNY FOR A MINUTE, OKAY?
HNNNN.
HE BREATHED! HE'S BREATHING!
DANNY!
HE CAN'T HEAR YOU. HE'S NOT REALLY HERE. HE'S JUST A SHELL.
I DON'T KNOW HOW LONG I CAN KEEP HIM ALIVE.
WHAT'S HAPPENED? WHAT'S GOING ON?
KISS ME FIRST. AND THEN I'LL TELL YOU.
TELL ME. PLEASE.
YOU'RE GOING TO HELL, JOHNNY.

"THE GATE IS IN THE NEXT ROOM.
"GHOST RIDER IS GOING THROUGH IT...
"...BUT JOHNNY BLAZE NEEDS TO REMEMBER WHAT'S WAITING FOR HIM HERE.
"YOU'RE GOING TO BE A LONG WAY FROM WHO YOU ARE AND WHERE YOU'RE FROM.
"YOU BETTER @#$% COME BACK.

"I WANT YOU BACK...
RUMMMMM
"...JUST LIKE DR. DIYU WANTS TO BRING HER BROTHER BACK...
"...JUST LIKE YOU WANT TO BRING DANNY BACK.
"ONE OF US IS GOING TO LOSE SOMEBODY THEY LOVE.

"HELL IS NEVER A PLACE YOU WANT TO FIND YOURSELF.
"BUT THAT'S ESPECIALLY TRUE FOR YOU, JOHNNY.
"BE SAFE AND SWIFT.
"YOU MAY HAVE BEEN THE KING OF HELL ONCE...
"...BUT WHEN THEY REALIZE YOU'RE THERE...
"...YOU'LL BE LIKE ROYALTY THROWN TO THE PEASANTS...
"...THE WARDEN SENTENCED TO HIS OWN PRISON."

THERE IS NO MAP TO HELL...
...BUT I HAVE CHANNELED AN ALGORITHM INTO THE SPIRIT'S COMPASS FOR EVIL...
...SO THAT I MIGHT FIND MY BROTHER'S LOST SOUL.
I DON'T KNOW IF YOU CAN HEAR ME, SPIRIT...
SLAK
...BUT I LIKE THE WAY YOU MAKE ME FEEL.

IT'S ONE THING TO STUDY YOU.
IT'S ANOTHER THING ENTIRELY TO...
...EXPERIENCE YOUR POWER.
DZZT
ROOOAAR
WHAT?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
I DON'T KNOW WHAT JUST HAPPENED-- BUT THERE...
...THERE, THAT'S BETTER.
JUST A LITTLE BIT FARTHER.

YOU'RE DOWN HERE SOMEWHERE, DELUN...
PLEASE, LITTLE BROTHER.
I'VE MISSED YOU SO.
I'M HERE. I'VE COME ALL THIS WAY.
HASSSSSS!

NO...
PLEASE. WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
KUNCH
DON'T LEAVE ME!
COME BACK. PLEASE COME BACK.
I'M RIGHT HERE, SISTER.

SKELCH
SKULCH
I'M SO GLAD YOU CAME.
BUT YOU WERE SO BUSY THINKING ABOUT WHAT YOU WANTED...
...YOU NEVER STOPPED TO THINK ABOUT WHAT I WANTED.
I'M NOT A VICTIM.
I CAME TO HELL BECAUSE IT'S WHERE I BELONG.
WELCOME TO MY HOME.
I HOPE YOU ENJOY YOUR STAY.

I'M ONLY A PASSENGER.
THE RIDER KNOWS WHERE TO GO.
REEEE!
HARRRRRR!
THE SPIRITS CAN SOMEHOW SENSE EACH OTHER...
HISSSS!
...LIKE BATS CALLING TO EACH OTHER IN THE DARK.

JUST AS I FOUND MY FAMILY...
...THE SPIRIT HAS FOUND HIS.
GOD HELP ANYONE WHO COMES BETWEEN THEM.
I KNOW YOU LONG FOR HIM AS HE LONGS FOR YOU.
SCREEE
COME WITH ME.
I WILL CARRY YOU HOME.

-WEEZ-
JOHNNY?
JOHNNY'S NOT HERE RIGHT NOW.
YOU NEED TO HURRY.
FOR HIS SAKE AND YOURS.

THE SPIRIT RETURNS.
THE HOST IS MADE WHOLE.
DANNY?!
PLEASE BE ALL RIGHT.
PLEASE BE HERE.
I'M HERE, BROTHER.

#11 50th Anniversary Variant by J. SCOTT CAMPBELL & SABINE RICH

NUMBER SIXTEEN

THREE YEARS AGO.
EAST L.A. ROBBIE REYES.
THE STORY BEGINS THE SAME.
IT'S NIGHT.
MAYBE IT'S RAINING HARD.
TWO YEARS AGO.
BROOKLYN. DANNY KETCH.
MAYBE WE'RE TIRED. OR BUZZING.
MAYBE IT'S THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE.
AND WE THINK, "AH, WHAT THE HELL."
NOW.
MAINE. JOHNNY BLAZE.
IT'S AGAINST OUR BETTER JUDGMENT.
BUT WE DO IT ANYWAY.
BECAUSE THE RIDERS ARE SUPPOSED TO HELP THE PEOPLE WHO NEED IT, YEAH?

"WHERE YOU HEADED?" WE ASK.
"NOT TOO FAR," HE SAYS.
"JUST DOWN THE ROAD."

I'M ROBBIE. GET IN.
NAME'S DANNY. AND HOLD ON TIGHT.
I APPRECIATE YOU...?
JOHNNY.
THERE'S SOMETHING OFF ABOUT HIS VOICE.
IT SOUNDS LIKE HE'S SPEAKING FROM THE BOTTOM OF A WELL.
WE ASK WHAT HIS NAME IS...
...BUT HE DOESN'T RESPOND.

AND THAT'S OKAY.
WE GET IT.
BECAUSE WE ALL HAVE SOMETHING TO HIDE.

MIND IF I PUT ON SOME MUSIC, MAN?
WHEN THE DIAL TURNS, THERE IS NO THROBBING BASS OR CATCHY CHORUS.
CHK
CCHHHREEEEAAAA
WHAT BLASTS FROM THE SPEAKERS IS A STORM OF STATIC BROKEN BY WAILING.
RRRAAAOOO
HAAASSSSSSSS
THE DISSONANCE IS AN ASSAULT ON THE NERVES, TOTALLY REPULSIVE.
IT SOUNDS LIKE A HARD WIND BLOWN THROUGH THE THROATS OF A THOUSAND CORPSES.

HIS GRIP IS TIGHT...
...AND SEARCHING.
HEY. WHEN I SAID HOLD ON TIGHT...
...I DIDN'T MEAN *THAT* TIGHT.
DANNY'S BODY IS NO LONGER HIS OWN.
IT INSTEAD FEELS LIKE AN ENGINE THAT'S BEING TAKEN APART...
...AND PUT BACK TOGETHER.

THE HEATER MUST HAVE DIED.
THE AIR IS COLD ENOUGH TO SHATTER LUNGS.
BREATH STEAMS, MAKING THE AIR SEEM FULL OF GHOSTS.
THE ROAD AHEAD IS A BLINDING-WHITE NOWHERE.
THERE'S NO SENSE OF UP OR DOWN... LEFT OR RIGHT.
AND TALIA, TOO, IS LOST--GONE IN HER OWN DARK DREAMS.

A SMELL COMES OFF THE HITCHHIKER'S BAG.
IT'S DAMP AND STICKY TO THE TOUCH.
WE CAN'T *NOT* OPEN IT...
...BUT WE WISH WE HADN'T.

EARLIER...
...YOU ASKED WHAT MY NAME WAS.
TURNS OUT, I HAVE *MANY*.
INCLUDING YOURS!

IT'S MORE THAN OUR FACE HE TAKES.
IT'S OUR *SPIRIT.*
WE FEEL A LOSS OF CONTROL...
...AS IF WE'VE BEEN HOT-WIRED.

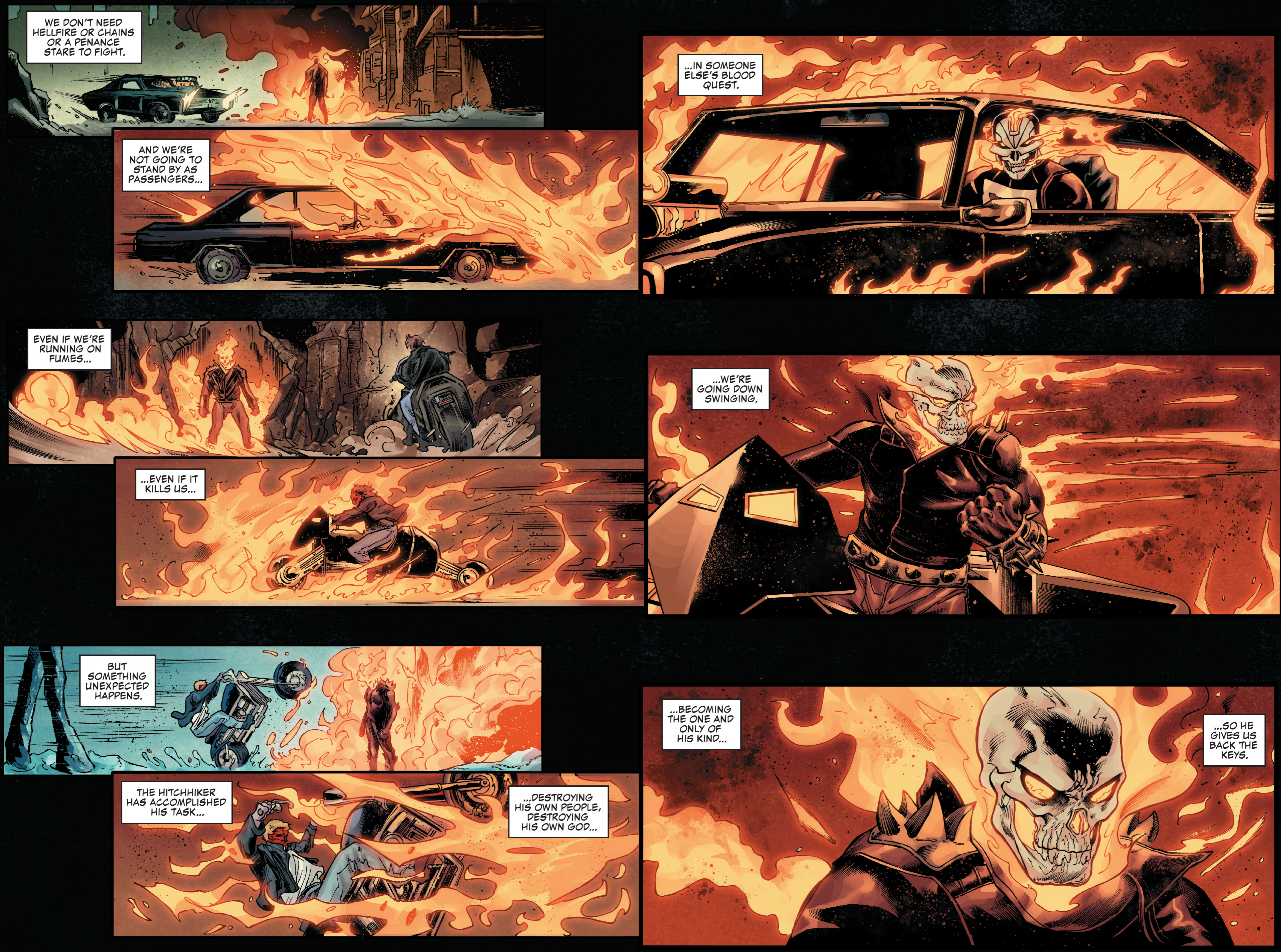
NOW THE HITCHHIKER IS THE RIDER BEHIND THE ENGINE...
...AND WE'RE THE PASSENGER BEING DRAGGED ALONG.

IT WAS CLEAR HE WANTED MORE THAN A JOYRIDE.
HE HAD A DESTINATION IN MIND.
HE NEEDED US FOR TRANSPORTATION.
AND HE NEEDED US AS A WEAPON.
THERE WERE OTHERS LIKE HIM THERE.
BUT NOT FOR LONG.

THEY ARE KNOWN AS THE *CHURCH OF THE FLAYED.*
THEY CAN CLOTHE THEMSELVES IN ANY APPEARANCE...
...AND ANY POWER.
HE WANTS TO BE THE ONLY ONE.
AND WE'RE HELPING HIM GET HIS WAY.

THEY WORSHIP AN OLD GOD.
ITS PLACE OF POWER--A TEMPLE OF SKINS--IS LOCATED DEEP IN THE WOODS.
THE HITCHHIKER DIDN'T COME HERE TO MAKE AN OFFERING.
HE CAME TO TAKE.
WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU STEAL THE SKIN OF A GOD?

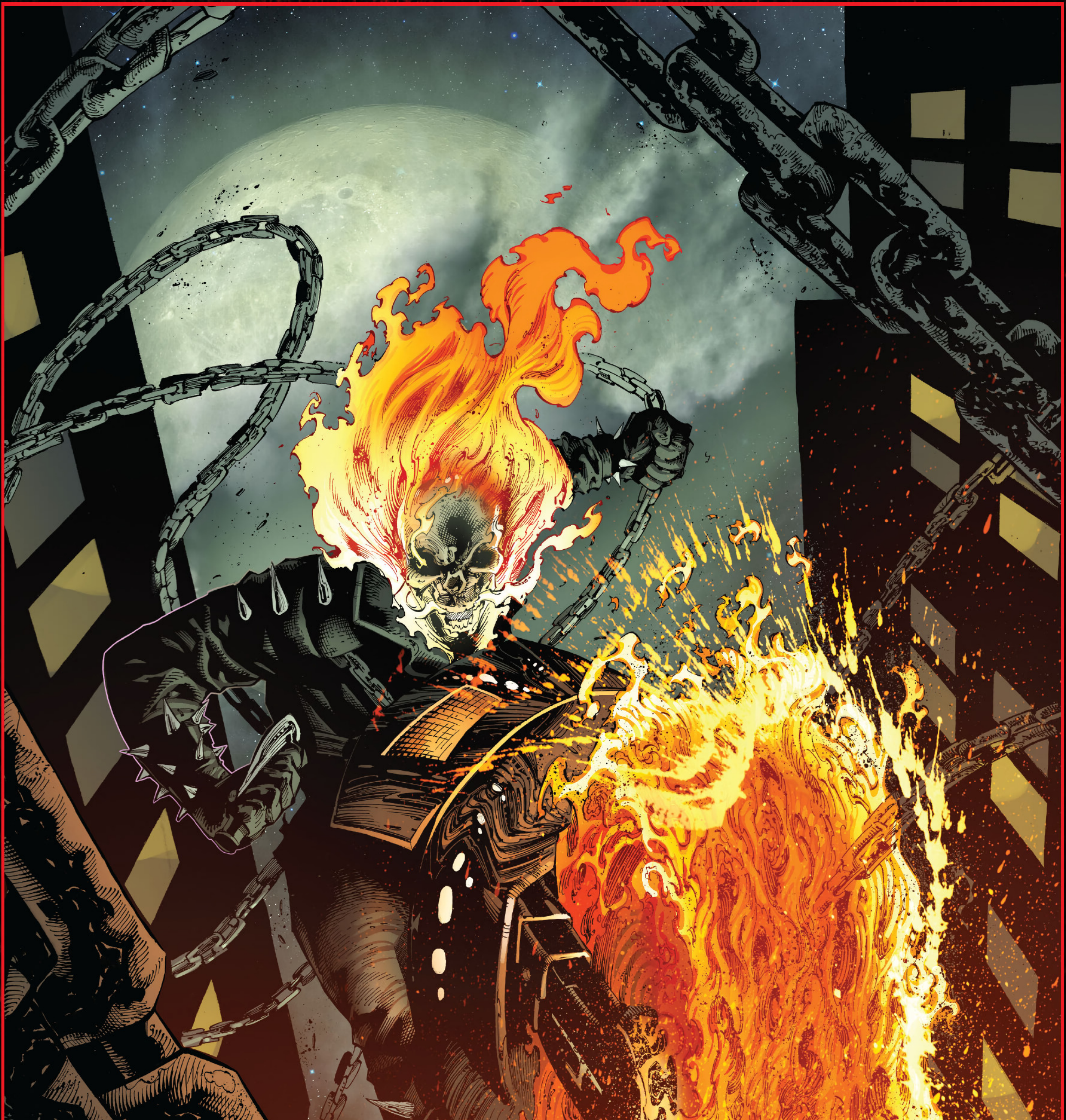
BUT HERE'S THE THING ABOUT US: ROBBIE AND DANNY AND JOHNNY.
WE LET OUR GUARD DOWN BECAUSE WE WANTED TO HELP.
THAT'S OUR DAILY STRUGGLE. WE WANT TO HELP...
...BUT WE SPECIALIZE IN HURT.
THE HURT WE'VE ENDURED.
AND THE HURT WE INFLICT.


WE DON'T NEED HELLFIRE OR CHAINS OR A PENANCE STARE TO FIGHT.
AND WE'RE NOT GOING TO STAND BY AS PASSENGERS...
...IN SOMEONE ELSE'S BLOOD QUEST.
EVEN IF WE'RE RUNNING ON FUMES...
...EVEN IF IT KILLS US...
...WE'RE GOING DOWN SWINGING.
BUT SOMETHING UNEXPECTED HAPPENS.
THE HITCHHIKER HAS ACCOMPLISHED HIS TASK...
...DESTROYING HIS OWN PEOPLE, DESTROYING HIS OWN GOD...
...BECOMING THE ONE AND ONLY OF HIS KIND...
...SO HE GIVES US BACK THE KEYS.

HE GIVES US BACK OUR FACES.
WE FEEL RAW AND BRUISED, GRATEFUL AND PISSED.
BUT MAYBE THERE'S ANOTHER PART OF US THAT RESPECTS HIM.
BECAUSE HE'S TAKEN CONTROL OF HIS DESTINY IN A WAY THAT WE HAVEN'T.
SOMETIMES IT FEELS LIKE *WE'RE* THE HITCHHIKERS, RELYING ON THE POWER AND GUIDANCE OF THE RIDER.
WE'RE KIND OF AWED BY THIS BOLD CLAIM ON POWER.
AND NOT FOR THE FIRST TIME, WE WONDER WHO WE ARE AND HOW WE CAN BETTER NAVIGATE OUR OWN ROADS.
WE'VE GOT A FEELING WE'LL BE RUNNING INTO HIM AGAIN SOMEWHERE DOWN THE ROAD.
WE ONLY HOPE, WHEN THE TIME COMES, WE'LL RECOGNIZE HIM.

F.B.I. HEADQUARTERS. WASHINGTON, DC.
I'M AFRAID THE *INFERNAL LABS* FACILITY AND MOST OF ITS EQUIPMENT WERE DESTROYED.
SO AS MUCH AS I APPRECIATE YOUR INTEREST, I DON'T HAVE MUCH TO OFFER YOU BEYOND DATA FILES, MR.--
IT'S ACTUALLY FATHER...
...FATHER PIKE.
I HAVE BEEN APPROACHED BY *ORCHIS*, AND I, IN TURN, APPROACH YOU.
ORCHIS DRAWS ITS RANKS FROM THE F.B.I. AND THE C.I.A., AMONG OTHERS. YOU ARE OBLIGATED TO THEIR MISSION TO PROTECT HUMANS FROM THE MUTANTS.
MANY IN MY COMMUNITY HAVE BEEN OBSERVING, WITH GREAT INTEREST, THE WORK OF INFERNAL LABS.
THE WEAPONIZATION OF THE BIOLOGY AND TECHNOLOGY OF HELL IS A LONG TIME COMING.
WHAT EXACTLY IS IT THAT ORCHIS IS PROPOSING? BECAUSE MY FUNDING KEEPS GETTING CUT TO THE BONE.
THIS WON'T COST YOU ANYTHING EXCEPT SPONSORSHIP, TAX SHELTER AND ABSOLUTE IMMUNITY.
A NEW *WEAPONS PLUS* PROGRAM.
PROJECT HELLFIRE.

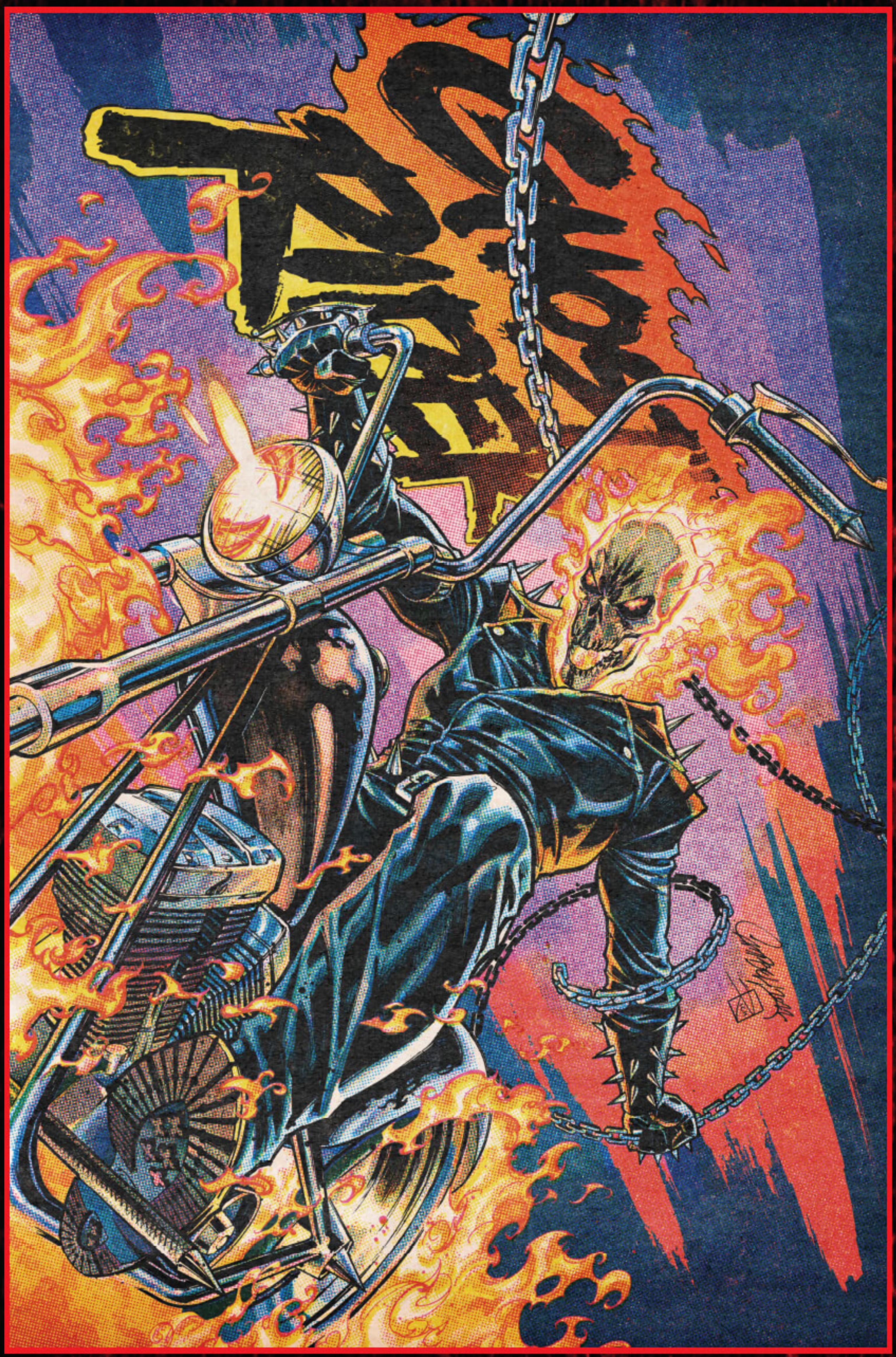
ORCHIS WILL READY THE PAPERWORK, BUT IN THE MEANTIME, HOW ABOUT WE SHAKE ON IT...
...IN A GESTURE OF *GOOD* FAITH.
WHAT-- *NNNGH!*
SSSSS
--WHAT DID YOU DO TO ME?
I BLESSED YOU AND YOUR GOVERNMENT.
I DO LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING TOGETHER.
NEXT:
GHOST RIDER! WOLVERINE!
WEAPONS OF VENGEANCE!



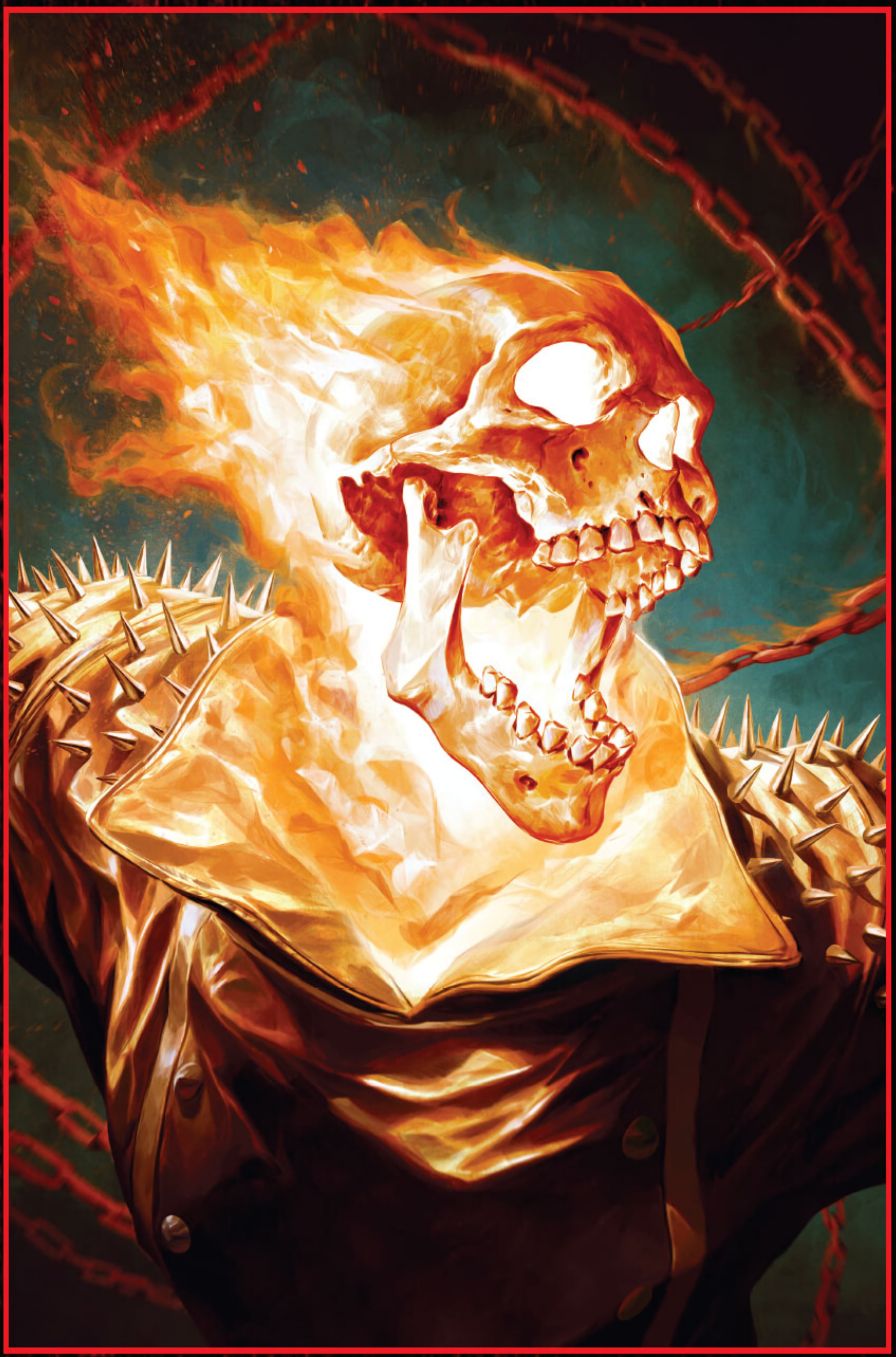
#11 Variant by RYAN STEGMAN, JP MAYER & MARTE GARCIA

GHOST RIDER
11
Percy Wachter Valenza

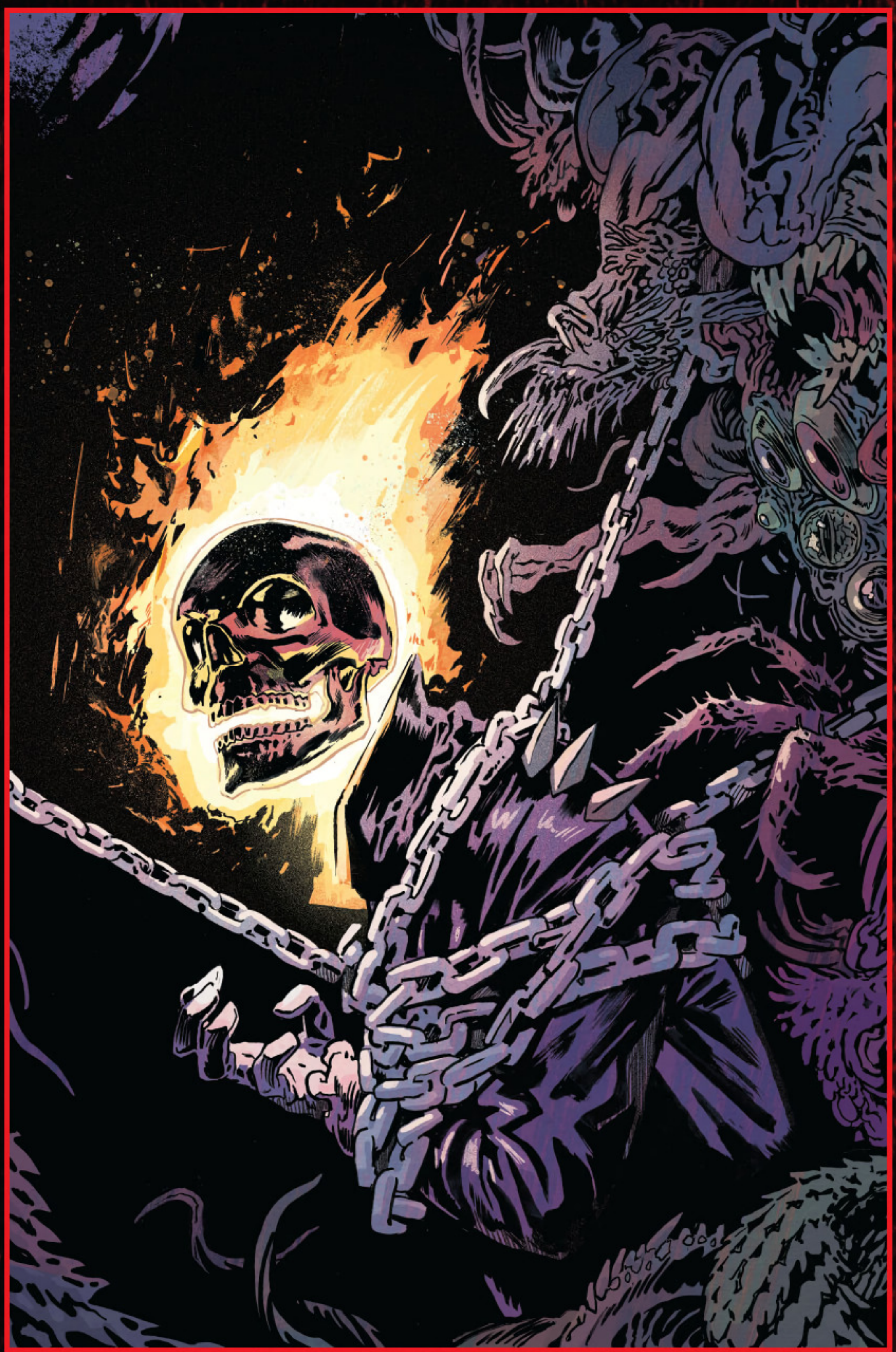
#11 Variant by FRANCESCO MOBILI & ROMULO FAJARDO JR.



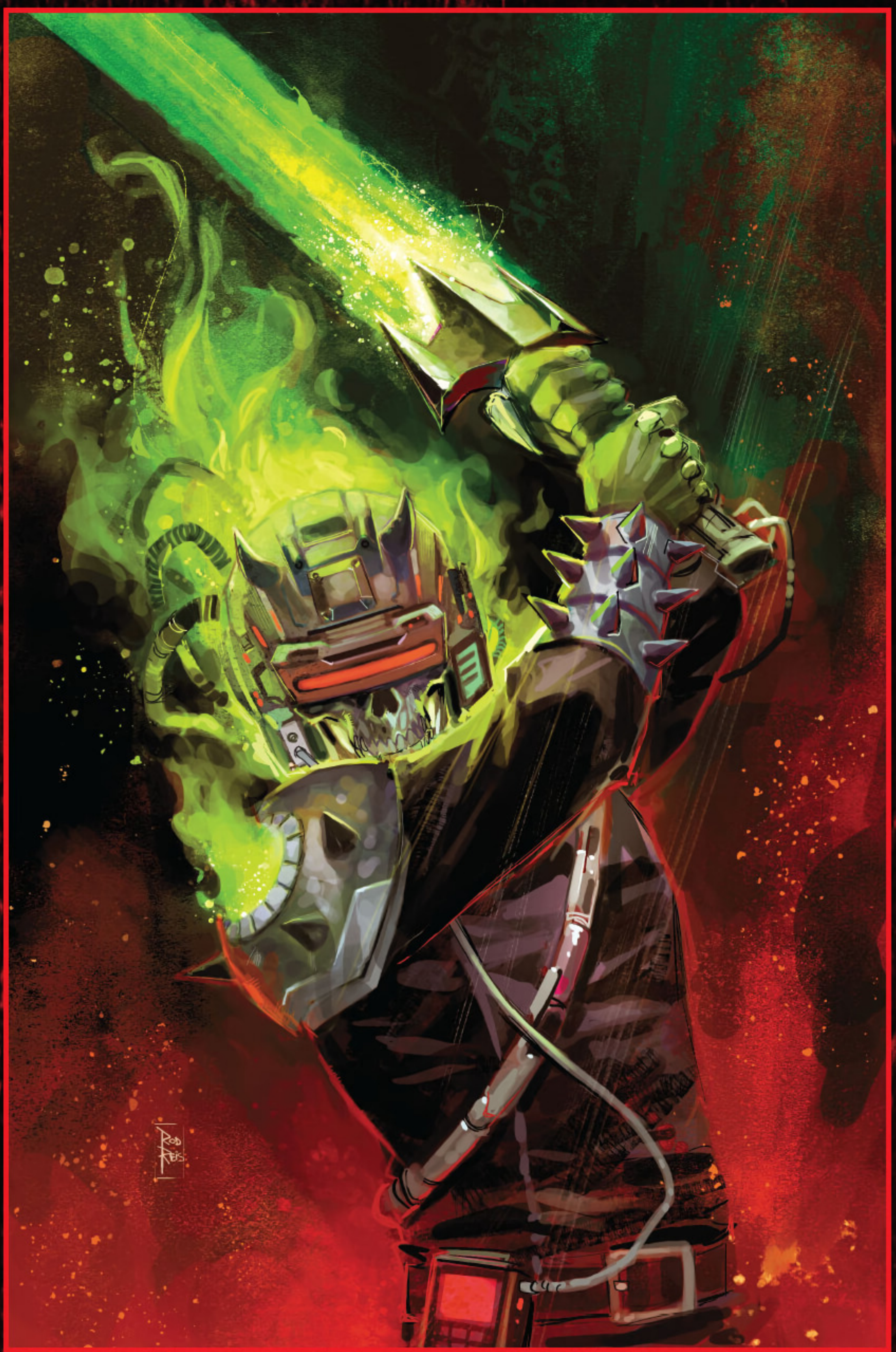
#11 50th Anniversary Retro Variant by
J. SCOTT CAMPBELL & SABINE RICH



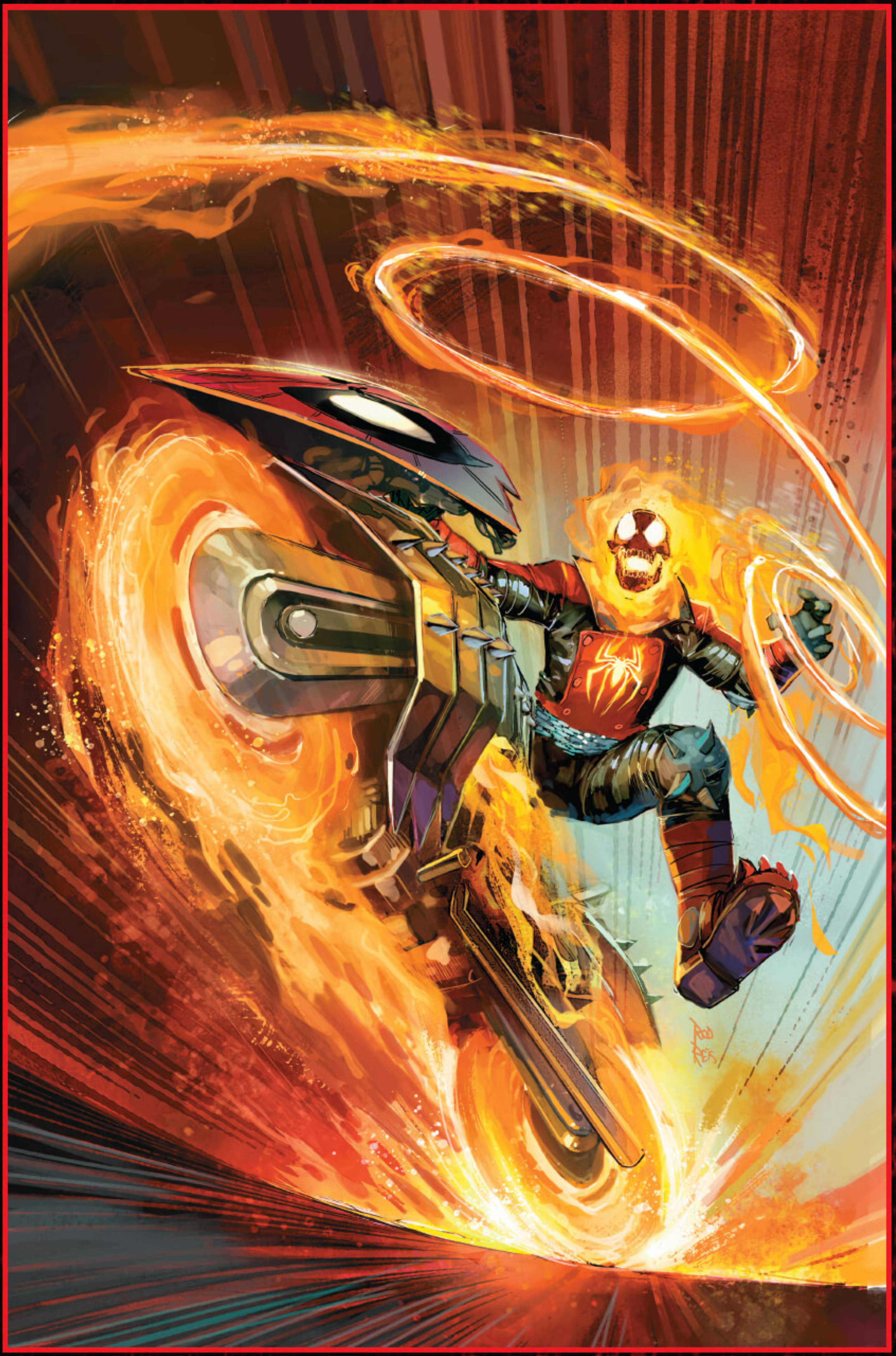
#12 Variant by
DAVE RAPOZA



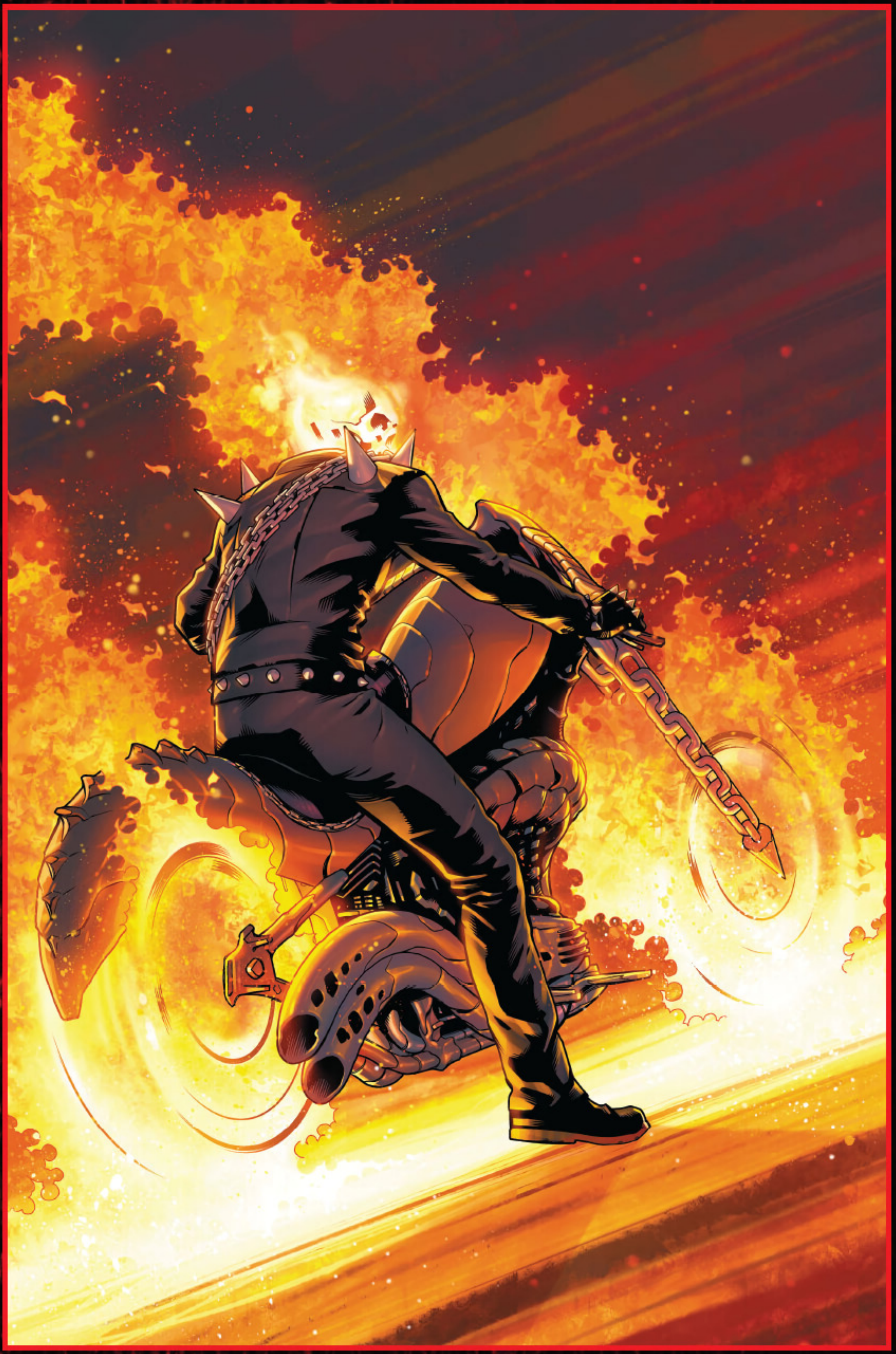
#13 Unlucky 13 Variant by
MICHAEL WALSH



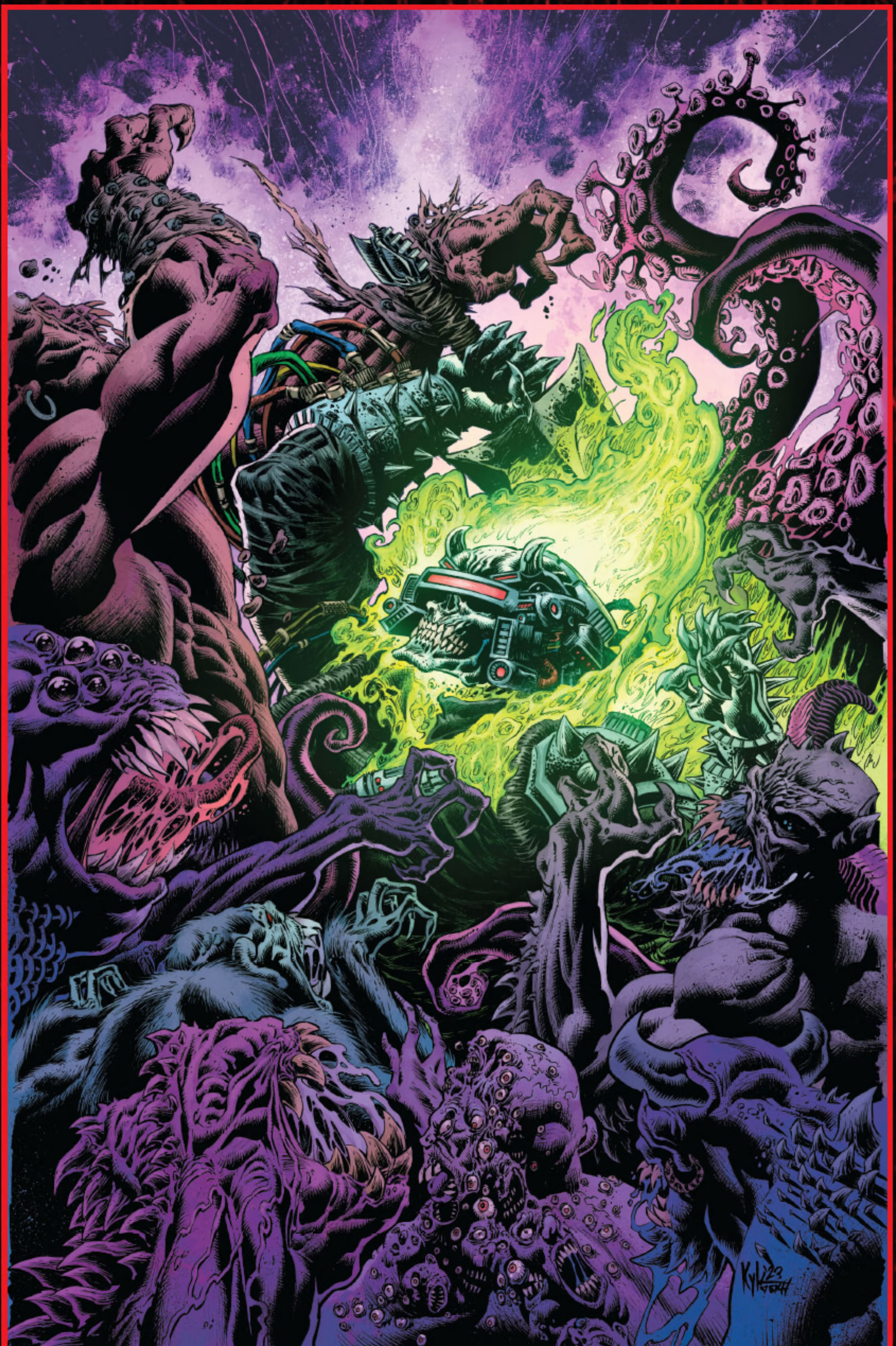
#13 Variant by
ROD REIS



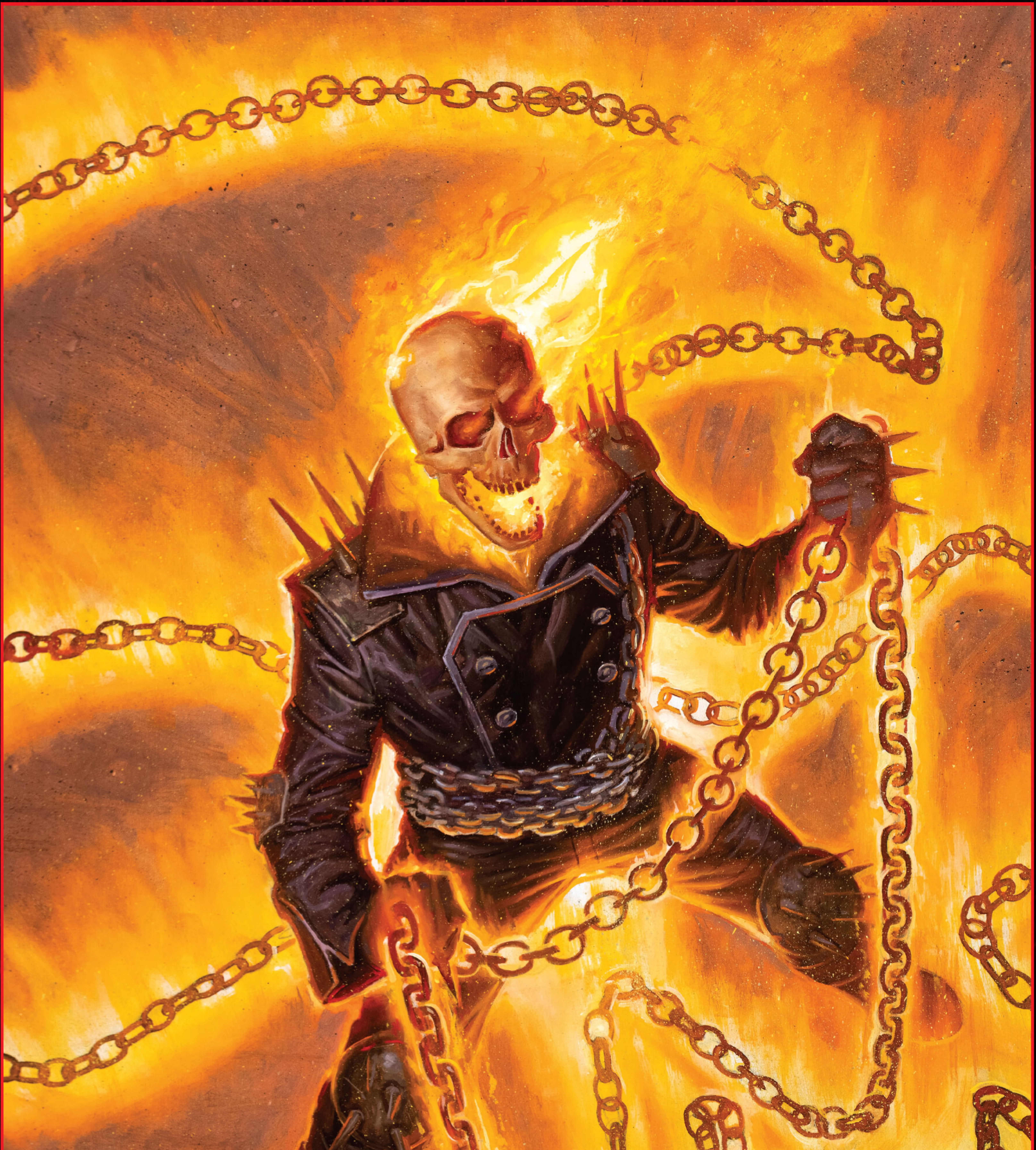
#14 Spider-Verse Variant by
ROD REIS



#15 Ultimate Last Look Variant by
JUANN CABAL & JESUS ABURTOV



#15 Variant by
KYLE HOTZ & MIKE SPICER



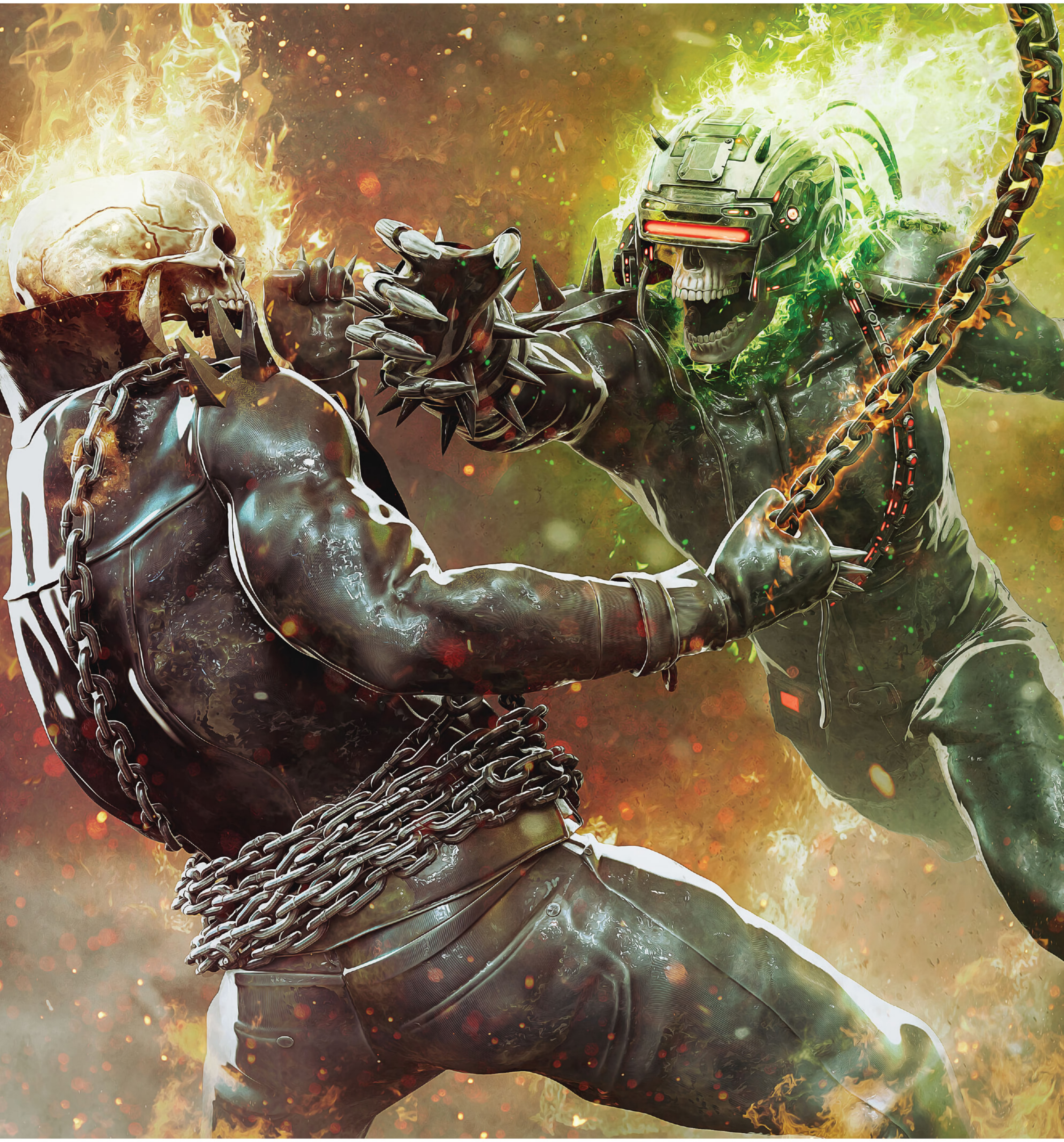
#16 *Variant by* E.M. Gist

#16 Hellfire Gala Variant by GERALD PAREL

"Still firing on all cylinders, giving readers one hellishly good time." – ComicBook.com

HELLFIRE AND DANNY KETCH!

THE FBI HAS CAST OUT JOHNNY BLAZE AND TALIA WARROAD, maybe because they're too destructive and unmanageable – or maybe because corruption reaches inside the very institution meant to protect us! As Johnny and Talia head to Savannah to investigate a necropolis, old friends and new foes appear on the horizon. A fresh chapter of horror begins for the Ghost Rider – and Danny Ketch is roaring up in the rearview mirror! But both Danny and Johnny have changed significantly, and they'll hardly recognize one another as their paths converge to war! Who is behind Danny's mindless carnage? And can Johnny and Talia save him before he destroys himself and many others? Plus: Ghost Rider shares a haunting team-up with South Korean hero Taegukgi! And what deadly threat links Johnny, Danny and Robbie Reyes?



T+

COLLECTING ***GHOST RIDER (2022) #11-16*** – BY BENJAMIN PERCY, DAVE WACHTER, CORY SMITH, BRENT PEEPLES, CHRIS CAMPANA, OREN JUNIOR AND BRYAN VALENZA.

MARVEL

Jack.T.Ripper
BLOODY MARVELOUS!